

CATHOLICISM, CAPITALISM *or* COMMUNISM

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ST. PAUL: THE E. M. LOHMANN CO.

1926

Nihil Obstat:

JOHN R. VOLZ
Censor Deputatus

Imprimatur:

+AUSTIN DOWLING
Archbishop of St. Paul
St. Paul, March 4th, 1925

Published January 1926

DEDICATION

To

RALPH ADAMS CRAM, LITT. D., LL. D.

Whose eminent services in the cause of Mediaevalism first
moved us to study a period of Christian Civilization,

Of which Leo XIII wrote:

“That nothing more perfect had been known before, or will
come to be known in the ages that have yet to be.”

This Volume is inscribed
In Admiration and Gratitude.

Author's Note

The thesis defended in this book is that the free development of Catholicism is the real cure for our social and industrial ills. We do think that the abuses of Capitalism are as dangerous as Socialism or Communism. The Church does not condemn Capitalism any more than she never condemned slavery, yet the influence of Catholicism was the diminution and ultimately the abandonment of slavery. The two could scarcely permanently co-exist together. Capitalism is a comparatively new economic system but we believe that the influence of the Church will be the gradual diminution and eventually the abandonment of Capitalism, because the spirit of the Catholic Church and the spirit of Capitalism cannot permanently co-exist together.

What will be the nature of the system that will supersede Capitalism? It will not be either Socialism or Communism, but what several Catholic writers have called Distributism. This is a system in which the great majority of men will own and control some private property.

Slavery and Paganism went along together. Capitalism and Protestantism have gone along together. Catholicism and Distributism went along together during the great thousand years of Christendom. Both are coming back and will go along together again perhaps for another and a greater thousand years.

The real battle of our time is not between Capitalism and Communism, but between Catholicism and social and industrial anarchy. When the battle is over the economic system will be either Leonine or Leninine.

The author wishes to thank all those who have been saying and writing such nice things about the contents of this book. Especially does he wish to thank the clergy of our own Archdiocese almost every one of whom has already purchased a copy. The advance sales of this edition we are pleased to say will make a second and much larger one necessary very soon.¹

JEREMIAH C. HARRINGTON

The Saint Paul Seminary
June 1st, 1925

¹ **Editor's Note:** A second edition of the present work never was realized due to the author's untimely death in 1926 at the age of 44 years.

Introduction

It is significant that the two great manifestos in the new Crusade for the redemption of the holy places of Christian society are the *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII and the Pastoral Letter of the American Hierarchy enunciating a Social Reconstruction Program. Significant but, in God's good time, inevitable. It was the Catholic Church that directed the organization and controlled the destinies for seven hundred years, of the only just and righteous social and economic system history has recorded. It was cold and bitter enmity of the Catholic Church that fostered and made operative the un-Christian industrial and financial organism that has held sway for the past century and a half. It was the Catholic Church which, when the time had come, was bound to reassert its changeless principles and assume the leadership of the new crusade.

Before the era-making pronouncement of the Holy Father there were many precursors, not all of them Catholics, but the great Bishop of Mainz will always stand first because of his priority in time and the enormous concrete results that followed his apostolate. The archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Manning, comes close in honor, with Cardinal Gibbons and Archbishop Ireland continuing the tradition in the New World. It will not do, however, to forget the non-Catholics in England who without the inspiration of a living Catholicism, yet raised the standard of revolt and preached a desperate and derided cause even when the power of the industrial tyranny was at its flood. There were many, from Robert Dale Owen in 1825, onward to William Morris, but two only need mention here, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury and John Ruskin, the first because of his great and measurably successful labors for the amelioration of the condition of the women and children slaves of British industrialism, the second because though like Lord Shaftesbury he was totally ignorant of Catholicism and therefore its enemy, he nevertheless enunciated in language unmatched for fire and eloquence, many of the fundamental principles concerning economies that the Catholic Church had been chiefly instrumental in formulating in the early Middle Ages.

Meanwhile the new system was breeding revolt amongst its own tools and instruments concurrently with its own phenomenal rise and mastery, and the moment of its own apparent victory over all opponents and all predecessors saw the outbreak in many places of what was frequently no less than armed rebellion. The theories of the idealists flowered and faded in futile Utopias; the passionate resentment and righteous anger of the great prophets like Ruskin seemed only to

have issue in art-movements of little force or permanence; even the valid pronouncements of Popes and bishops, when they resulted in definite action produced little more than parties and factions that lost their usefulness and significance in political and diplomatic activity. Only the outraged proletariat seemed to function with any degree of vigor and endurance, and here the leadership was such, the following such, that labor-unionism, after winning its victory, became increasingly selfish, tyrannical and unjust, merging into, or creating as a by-product, communism, syndicalism and bolshevism, the rampant and revolutionary engines of a calamitous class-consciousness, functioning without regard to Catholic truth, Christian ethics or even the most rudimentary principles of human conduct.

It was, and is today, a case of warfare between two bitter, uncompromising and generally unscrupulous antagonists, a warfare over so fundamental a factor in life that if it runs its course it can have but one issue and that the definitive ending of an era of civilization that from its beginnings about the end of the XVth century has lasted nearly five hundred years.

Since the issue was joined about a century ago, there has been no lack of efforts at compromise and accommodation. In an ever-increasing number men have come forward and measures have been devised all to the end of finding a solution of an issue the fatal possibilities of which have only revealed themselves in all their significance during the last five years. With the ominous International on the one hand working through Russian bolshevism and its agencies in nearly all the countries of the world towards confessed red revolution and an ultimate dictatorship of the proletariat, and on the other desperate empiricists of a hundred different types hunting for a formula that would satisfy both combatants, a formula to their minds necessarily legalistic and essentially secularist and highly specialized in its nature, the contest has gone on without abatement and with a steady increase in the victories won by the proletarian forces. A final victory by either side, as matters now stand, would be fatal for neither is conditioned by fundamental principles of even-handed justice or directed along lines of righteousness. Anger and selfish interests control, not charity and wisdom and sense of brotherhood. The peace of communism as dictated from Moscow would be the peace of ultimate death; the peace of capitalism as dictated from New York and London would be the peace of slavery and the Servile State.

Already both Italy and Spain have escaped almost by a miracle from following the path of Russia, but the same forces that so nearly worked their downfall are operating elsewhere with renewed intensity. These efforts are now chiefly towards the East, for the reverses in Italy, Spain, Germany and the Balkans have called a halt and the tempers of Great Britain and Ireland in Europe and the United States on this side the ocean, are correspondingly not favorable to this sort of thing. This is particularly true of America, where labor has held and is generally holding a

position of strong and rational good sense, under the sane and vigorous leadership of men like Gompers and Green. Humanly speaking, the danger of an anti-Christian communism either here or in England or Germany, is practically non-existent, and it is equally true to say that a return in any of these countries to the capitalistic dominance of half a century ago is quite as remote a possibility. It is not to say however that the matter is settled and all is well. The righteous and beneficent social and economic and political condition that must be the aim of all good men, such a system as that which held during the great five hundred years of the Mediaeval synthesis, does not obtain, and though conditions are measurably better along every line than they were when Bishop Ketteler made his pronouncement at Fulda or Leo XIII issued his *Rerum Novarum*, or even the four Bishops of the Catholic Hierarchy gave to the world their Program of Social Reconstruction, still a false situation exists, and will, until Capitalism and Labor cease to function as separate and antagonistic entities and become merged in one corporation where the interests of each are conserved in liberty and co-operation.

In a general way this is the condition that obtained during the Middle Ages and it is inevitable therefore that towards this time we must look when efforts are made in the direction of a Just and workable system to take the place of the unjust and unworkable scheme that now precariously maintains itself. Like the Pope and Bishops before him, Father Harrington rightly makes this the basis of his inquiry, assembling in one place not only the facts of history but also the authoritative testimonies to their validity and their correspondence with Catholic truth.

Hitherto, and very naturally, the stress has been laid on the false principles and the unrighteous actions of the capitalistic element in the contentious dualism, and it has been assumed that this alone was to be brought to the bar of justice, convicted and penalized, and then reformed even to the point of obliteration by the new operation of old but eternal laws. It is true that the capitalism that had its birth in the XVIIIth century (after other two centuries of slow gestation) was the first and great offender and that before the bar of Catholic justice it merits and must receive condemnation. This is not to say, however, that the institution of capital or that of private property should be abolished according to the fancy of ill-informed communists. Still less is it to say that capital alone must submit to the correction of Christian discipline or alone may learn better ways from the example of Mediaeval society. Labor, now that it is by way of gaining the whip hand, shows many signs of a proclivity to error and a descent upon false principles and unrighteous ways that, were it to work out into an established system would be as oppressive and unjust, and as far from Catholic truth as that under which it has suffered for so many generations.

Labor has as much to learn from Mediaevalism as capital; perhaps more. Not only in the matter of the principles of charity and justice but in the elements of

conduct. A first principle of the Mediaeval guilds was the attaining and preservation of the highest standards of quality in product and the protection of the purchaser from fraud or loss. The guild labored to raise the standard of workmanship to that achieved by the most competent members and its apprentice system was comprehensive and efficient. To the guild justice was not a thing pertaining to its own members alone, it was a universal factor in an indivisible society, and it concerned itself quite as much with the interests of the purchaser as with those of its own producing members. A strike could not have happened in the Middle Ages for the conditions then were radically different to those that have come into existence during the last century and a half, but however necessary this form of action may have become under these new circumstances there are two forms, viz the jurisdictional strike and the sympathetic strike that would have then been unthinkable whatever the conditions, since the first always and the second generally would be impossible under the Mediaeval and Catholic sense of justice and honor.

I may mention two cases that have very recently happened in my own experience to enforce this point. One was the case of a Catholic church under construction where, in spite of the fact that most of the workmen were Catholics, formal agreements were repeatedly broken and one strike after another called on purely jurisdictional matters, with the result that the pastor was mulcted in the sum of ten per cent of the proper cost of the church on account of delays and other embarrassments. The other was in connection with the baptistry of a cathedral where there was much rich and elaborate carving in stone. The specifications called for hand work only, the carving was half completed when the machine carvers demanded a share of the work. This was denied them since the work could not adequately be done except by hand, whereupon a strike was called by some means or other and the whole body of stone carvers was called out, in spite of formal agreements and against their vigorous protests.

What I mean is that here are cases of flagrant injustice issuing out of purely selfish motives, with loss to innocent parties, and that this sort of thing not only brings discredit on the cause of labor, but is just what could not have happened in the Catholic Middle Ages, and that therefore labor must learn from this same period its own salutary lessons just as capital must learn the lessons that apply particularly to its own case.

As President Coolidge has recently said, there is no power on Earth except religion that can meet and solve the manifold and threatening problems that confront us today. This is particularly true of the economic and industrial problems. Neither legislation nor guerilla warfare can meet the situation. Philosophy, education and humanitarianism are helpless and have failed. The root of the industrial problem, like that of every other that confronts us, is a root that

takes ultimate hold on religion. It is the Catholic Church alone that can bring this religious force to bear and make it operative, for of all the religious organizations now extant, the Catholic Church alone knows its own mind and speaks not only with the voice of divine authority but with the cumulative power of a thousand years of constructive history and of dogmatic social principles that are definitive and cannot be changed.

There are minor matters of detail in this volume to which I should hardly give full assent, as undoubtedly there are things set down in this Introduction to which Father Harrington would take exceptions. In fundamental principles, however, I believe we are at one.

Ralph Adams Cram.

PREFACE

I am glad of the opportunity to commend this book. There may have been a time when the work of popularizing Catholic social teaching was more necessary than today, but I have come across no such period in my reading of history. It is acknowledged, even by non-Catholics, that the Church possesses adequate principles for the solution of industrial problems. Not long ago, the Rev. P. E. Johnson, Research Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ, testified to the existence of “a body of Catholic Doctrine bearing upon industrial conditions and relations that is quite without parallel in Protestantism.”

Our great defect is general ignorance of these social principles, this “body of doctrine.” Some time ago, a considerable number of Catholics met in Chicago to form an organization for the study and solution of industrial problems. Had the meeting been called to discuss ways and means for the erection of a new church, or school, or orphan asylum, the various groups would have exhibited substantial unity of sentiment. In the meeting actually held, however, the representatives of capital and the representatives of labor exhibited differences of viewpoint and conclusion which were distressing and fundamental. These differences were largely due to ignorance of Catholic social teaching, or at least to ignorance of the implications of that teaching, ignorance of what Catholic social principles mean when applied to the actual conditions of industry.

A great amount of education is necessary among Catholics of every social class: First, to inform them that the Church has a system of doctrine on industrial relations; second, to make them acquainted with this doctrine, and third, to enable them to put this doctrine into practice. Therefore, *I welcome the appearance of Father Harrington's Work, and express the hope that it will have a very wide circulation.*

JOHN A. RYAN

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CHAPTER I

SOCIAL ACTION THE NEW APOLOGETIC

Article I

The Need for Social Action

The average Catholic is fairly well acquainted with the attitude of the Church toward the salvation of the individual soul; but he is not as well acquainted as he should be with the fact that the same Church has a very comprehensive and definite attitude towards group life. There is such a thing as an authoritative Catholic doctrine on industrial, social and political institutions and relations. In other words, there is a fairly definite Catholic viewpoint in social science. Social science is the systematic study of the social organism. The social organism is the very structure of society, with the mutual action of its various elements, made up of the individual, the family, various private associations, the Church and the State. To live and thrive men must associate with their fellow men. We mingle with our family, our friends and our neighbors. We are companions of their toil and recreation. We are influenced by local and national authorities. We are more or less dependent on a thousand functions of labor, learning and play. The transportation of goods and passengers, the various public services, the public utilities of post, telegraph and railway form a most complicated network from which we cannot shake ourselves free even if we would. All these things and more make up the social organism. The scientific, systematic study of this complex social organism is social science.

The Voice of Authority Calls to Social Action

But what has the Church got to do with social science? What has the Catholic priest or the Catholic layman got to do with social science? Have we not been going along all right for years without ever starting a single social study club? This attitude of mind in some quarters is considered even pious! It is an index of the mental and moral stature of men who have never known the true spirit of the Church, who have never been thrilled by its harmonies. Social science today is not

a mere hobby for the priest, nay, it is a sacred duty placed upon him by the highest authority in the Church. Writing to the bishop of Bergamo on the social question, Pope Benedict XV speaks of this clerical obligation as follows: "Now, it is the duty of priests and particularly of pastors to combat vigorously such pernicious enemies of Catholic and civil society, with united effort among themselves, and co-operating zealously under your leadership, Venerable Brother. Let no one of these think that there is question here of an activity which is foreign to the sacred ministry because it has to do with economics, for in this very social question the eternal salvation of souls is imperilled. Wherefore we desire that they count among their duties to apply themselves as much as they can in their studies and by their vigilance and activities, to the theory and practice of social science, and that they aid with all their resources those who were engaged in our organizations."

Duty of Catholic Laymen

Pius X in an Apostolic Letter to the bishops of Italy is equally emphatic in inculcating this duty on Catholic laymen. He writes as follows on Catholic social action: "In our first encyclical to the Bishops of the world, in which we echoed all that our glorious predecessors had laid down concerning the Catholic action of the laity, we declared that this action was deserving of the highest praise, and was indeed necessary in the present condition of the Church and of society. And we cannot but praise warmly the zeal shown by so many illustrious personages who have for a long time dedicated themselves to this laborious task, and the ardor of so many brilliant young people who have eagerly hastened to lend their aid to the same."

And Leo XIII writes in that historic document the encyclical on the condition of the working classes: "Neither must it be supposed that the solicitude of the Church is so occupied with the spiritual concerns of its children as to neglect their interests temporal and earthly. Its desire is that the poor, for example, should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and should better their condition in life; and for this it strives." In another Apostolic Letter the same illustrious Pontiff writes: "It is the opinion of some, and the error is already very common, that the social question is merely an economic one, whereas in point of fact, it is first of all a moral and religious matter, and for that reason its settlement is to be sought mainly in the moral law and pronouncements of religion."

American Problems

But after all, perhaps, these documents had only conditions in Europe in mind. The problems arising from industrial and social relations in America are not so

pressing for a solution. Let us listen to the Hierarchy of the United States. Here is an extract from the Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops published February 12, 1920. They quote the opening paragraph of the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII: "That the spirit of revolutionary change which has long been disturbing the nations of the world should have passed beyond the sphere of politics and made its influence felt in the cognate sphere of practical economics, is not surprising. The elements of the conflict now raging are unmistakable, in the vast expanse of industrial pursuits and the marvelous discoveries of science; in the changed relations between masters and workmen; in the enormous fortunes of some few individuals and the utter poverty of the masses; in the increased self-reliance and closer mutual combinations of the working classes; as also, finally, in the prevailing moral degeneracy. The momentous gravity of the state of things now obtaining fills every mind with painful apprehension; wise men are discussing it; practical men are proposing schemes; popular meetings, legislatures and rulers of nations are all busied with it, and actually there is no question that has taken a deeper hold on the public mind." The Pastoral Letter of the American Hierarchy goes on to say: "How fully these statements (of Pope Leo XIII) apply to our present situation must be clear to all who have noted the course of events during the year just elapsed. The war indeed has sharpened the issues and intensified the conflict that rages in the world of industry; but the elements, the parties and their respective attitudes are practically unchanged. Unchanged also are the principles which must be applied, if order is to be restored and placed on such a permanent basis that our people may continue their peaceful pursuits without dread of further disturbance. So far as men are willing to accept these principles as the common ground on which all parties may meet and adjust their several claims, there is hope of a settlement without the more radical measures which the situation seemed but lately to be forcing on public authority. But in any event the agitation of the last few months should convince us that something more is needed than temporary arrangements or local readjustments. The atmosphere must be cleared so that, however great the difficulties which presently block the way, men of good will may not, through erroneous preconceptions, go stumbling on from one detail to another, thus adding confusion to darkness of counsel."

The wonder is that social action among the clergy and laity should be considered extraneous matter and foreign to the genius of the Catholic church. "The Catholic church is too much the Mother Church of the poor and lowly and humble, too much the spouse of the carpenter's Son, that great Friend of all who labor and are heavy burdened, not to hear forever in its heart the tender yet puissant cry, 'I have pity on the multitude.' . . . This labor the Catholic church has always sanctified and held up as a necessary and a blessed thing. Her Founder was accounted the son of a common laboring man, Himself a toiler at the bench. Her first missionaries were

working men – fishermen, publicans, a physician, a tent-maker. She, first and alone, uplifted on her banner the symbols of labor and declared them worthy and holy. All her early documents bear the praise of labor.” *The Middle Ages*, Shahan. PP. 143, 144.

This has been the continuous traditional role played by the Church down to the present day. There may have been in the past and there may be even now among her clergy a few timid parasites meekly clinging to the skirts of plutocracy. But they are too insignificant in number and in influence to dim the glory which her noble Christlike priesthood has ever reflected on the Catholic church. Let me appeal to your patriotism as well as your zeal for the cause of religion in these United States of America. I will quote the late Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore in his Memorial addressed to the Holy See on behalf of labor: “Among all the glorious titles which the Church’s history has deserved for her, there is none which at present gives her so great influence as that of ‘Friend of the People.’ Assuredly, in our democratic country, it is this title which wins for the Catholic church not only the enthusiastic devotedness of the millions of her children, but also the respect and admiration of all our citizens, whatever be their religious belief. It is the power of this title which renders persecution almost an impossibility, and which draws towards our Holy Church the great heart of the American people.”

Reasons for Our Social Action

We are in this thing, then, because it is the Catholic thing. We are in it because we have been called to it by the illustrious Pontiffs quoted – Popes, Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops. We are in it because souls will be lost if the masses can point the finger of scorn at us and our Church as the mere moral policemen of capitalism. Because when powerful interests are able to ignore the teaching of the Church, then it is, in the words of Leo, “that a small, number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.” In the words of the great Commoner,¹ the Catholic church cannot afford to stand idly by “while capital is placing a crown of thorns on the head of labor and crucifying it on a cross of gold.” We are in this business of social action because we believe that another great glory will be won by the Catholic church in the twentieth century, for she alone has a program that will solve the great question of our age – the social problem.

“God Almighty has so constituted the Christian life that in every age, or in every series of ages, it appears with a new apologia, due to the new conditions of the race. Now in our day, if I am not deceived; this new apologia will be the product of

¹ Editor’s Note: “Commoner,” i. e., American politician Willian Jennings Bryan.

the social question, and progress in that question will most certainly be made in the name of Jesus Christ living in His Church. To the classic defenses of the past – to martyrdom, to the more perfect sanctity of the Church, to the doctrine of the Fathers, to the Monastic Life, to the overthrow of barbarous powers, to Christian art and literature, to the new poetry, to the harmony of science and faith, and to the new forms of charity of the last two centuries – to all these will be added this fresh apologia – a solution of the social question by Catholicism and by the science Catholicism inspires.” (Cardinal Capecelatro, *Christ, the Church and Man*, pp. 77-78.)

Article II

The Church and Social Action; A New Apologetic

A certain professor of sociology in a Catholic college noticed that when he treated of the morality of some industrial and social questions, the students often seemed surprised at the solutions. The mental attitude of the class reflected fairly accurately that of any like group of average Catholics. Of course, the average Catholic, like a good, loyal and conservative citizen, takes his ethics largely from the editorial columns of a press which, to put it mildly, seems to be not a little bit biased, or would one rather say prejudiced, in favor of certain classes in the industrial community. Therefore is it considered akin to heresy, at least offensive to pious ears, for even a Catholic priest to express views that might be inclined to shock a well-defined class of smug conservative respectability. The professor in question one day dictated three extracts on the same point, taken from the writings of three well-known authorities on industrial and social questions, viz., Leo XIII, Samuel Gompers and Lenin, and asked the class to write after the respective extracts the name of the one whom he considered its author. He was not a little surprised to find that a majority of the students made Lenin the author of the *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, while Gompers was considered also less radical than the Pope! The reasons given by a good number of the students for canonizing the Russian Bolshevik was that the extract from the famous encyclical on the conditions of the working man seemed un-American! Perhaps the humorist translated literally by Latinizing the 100 per cent American as *Boobus Americanus*.

Have patience with us therefore for quoting at such length so many and such venerable authorities in favor of the movement now so well known in Europe as Catholic Social Action, which is nothing else than a reawakening in Catholic circles to the needs of the day, and whose slogan is the cry with which Ozanam startled the generation in which he lived, “Back to the Masses!”

The Call of Recent Popes

If, then, there be those among our readers who think that perhaps after all it would be better for the Church to keep exclusively to her primary mission in the world, viz., the Glory of God and the salvation of souls, to confine her message to the American people to a strictly cold and stereotyped dogmatic defense of religion, our reply is, that evidently the Sovereign Pontiffs are not of that mind, and at no time in the long history of the Papacy are they so outspoken on this very question of Catholic social action as they have been in our own day and age, from the saintly Pius IX to his namesake and successor, Pius XI, now gloriously reigning from the Throne of the Fisherman. "My children," said Pius IX in 1855, to the Vincentians gathered about him at Rome, "I consecrate you Knights of Jesus Christ. The world does not believe in preaching or in priesthood, but it still believes in charity. Let us advance to the conquest of the world by the love of the poor."

Benedict XV, in a letter addressed to the French Episcopate in the summer of 1919, has this pointed passage: "Coming to a particular point, who does not see that henceforth the current flows ever more and more strongly towards democracy? The proletariat, as it is called, having taken a preponderant part in the war, is anxious in every country to obtain from it the greatest possible advantages. Unfortunately, they are often deceived and pushed to excesses which, in overturning the social order that is conformable to human nature itself, turn finally to the detriment of all, and are especially damaging to the workers and those less fortunately placed. That has happened to other nations which until recently were prosperous, but are now reduced to an extremity of misery which they would like to extend to all Europe, and even the whole world; and is not this a plain proof of what we say?"

The Church the Friend of the Workers

"The Catholic Church has ever been the friend of those who are in trouble; she has always taught that the public authorities, established for the welfare of all, should strive especially for the betterment of the condition of those who suffer. That is why, as the Bishops so well say, the clergy and people, instead of merely opposing the claims of the proletariat, ought to support them, provided that they are within the bounds of what is just and honest, as set forth clearly in the immortal encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII."

Benedict was reiterating the teaching of Leo who wrote, thirty years before him, "at this moment *the condition of the working population is the question of the*

hour; and nothing can be of higher interest to all classes of the State than that it should be rightly and reasonably decided.”

There is, then, today a great struggle going on around us in the world. Sometimes it takes on all the ugly characteristics of civil warfare. It is a fight that cannot go on indefinitely unless civilization as we know it is doomed. But we are the prophets of a better hope. We know that a remedy must needs be found and we know also what that remedy is. We must have the courage of our convictions and fearlessly apply it. There is urgent need that we take an active interest in this question immediately. “All agree,” says Pope Leo, “and there can be no question whatever, that some remedy must be found, and that quickly found, for the misery and wretchedness which press so heavily at this moment on the large majority of the very poor. The ancient workmen’s guilds were destroyed in the last century, and no other organization took their place. Hence by degrees it has come to pass that workingmen have been given over, isolated and defenseless, to the callousness of employers and the greed of unrestrained competition. The evil has been increased by rapacious usury, which though more than once condemned by the Church is nevertheless under a different form, but with the same guilt, still practiced by avaricious and grasping men.”

The Remedy of Social Ills

The Holy Father goes on to point out the remedy of these social evils. “There is nothing more useful than to look at the world as it is, and at the same time to look elsewhere for a remedy to its troubles.” The Holy Father also tells us where to look. He says: “When a society is perishing, the true advice to give to those who would restore, is to recall it to the purpose and principles from which it sprang. If society is to be cured now, in no other way can it be cured but by a return to the Christian life and to the Christian institutions.” Therefore, “no practical solution of this question will ever be found without the assistance of religion and of the Church.”

No wonder Cardinal Manning was able to write in *The Dublin Review* July, 1891: “Since the Divine words, ‘I have compassion on the multitude,’ were spoken in the wilderness, no voice has been heard throughout the world pleading for the people with such profound and loving sympathy for those that toil and suffer as the voice of Leo XIII. This is no rhetorical exaggeration, but strict truth. None but the Vicar of our Divine Lord could so speak to mankind. No Pontiff has ever had such an opportunity so to speak, for never till now has the world of labor been so consciously united, so dependent upon the will of the rich, so opposed to the fluctuations of adversity and to the vicissitudes of trade. Leo XIII, looking out of the watch-tower of the Christian world, as St. Leo the Great used to say, has before

him what no Pontiff yet has ever seen. He sees all the kingdoms of the world and the suffering of them. The moan of discontent, of toil, of sorrow, goes up before him . . . It is upon such a world that he looks down; and his heart is with the poor: ‘I have compassion on the multitude’ – on the poor, who, as he says, are ‘the majority of mankind.’ “

Past and Present

If these statements were but too true in 1891, what would Leo and Manning have written in 1925? Is the influence that we are exerting on these great social questions so very democratic after all? We are satisfied to preach about our past glories while living with regard to these problems a life of dry rot. A man may say beautiful things about the Middle Ages without being considered radical; but the same individual would be careful to let it be known among his friends that he was no friend of labor! Yet every educated man knows why the Middle Ages were so beautiful. “It admits then of no doubt that, in the days of the Middle Ages, the Church represented the truest interests of the people, material as well as moral; that it was through the Church that the voice of the people was heard, and that it was by the Church that the power of the people made itself felt. And as a result of this posture of affairs more especially on account of the social institutions and teaching of the Church, Kings on the whole ruled wisely; men and labor were held in honor; riches were better divided, and the various classes of the community were more closely united than in any other period of the world’s history. It was, in fact, owing to the popular influence of the Catholic Church of the period that, notwithstanding the passions and violence of the times, she was yet enabled, in the words of Dr. Cunningham, a Protestant writer, ‘to succeed in moralizing industrial and commercial conceptions and institutions, and in inspiring men with a keen sense of personal responsibility in the employment of secular power of every kind.’ (*Western Civilization*, vol. II, p. 104).” Henry C. Day, S. J.

Democratic Influence of the Church

Mr. Woodrow Wilson, ex-President of the United States, as professor of political science, whose long years of study and research have eminently qualified him to speak, has this to say of the democratic influence of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages: “The only reason why government did not suffer dry rot in the Middle Ages under the aristocratic system which then prevailed, was that most of the men who were efficient instruments of government were drawn from the Church – from that great religious body which was then the only Church, that body which is now distinguished from other religious bodies as the Roman Catholic

Church. The Roman Catholic Church was then, as it is now, a great democracy. There was no peasant so humble that he might not become a priest, and no priest so obscure that he might not become a Pope of Christendom; and every chancellory in Europe, every Court in Europe, was ruled by these learned, trained and accomplished men – the priesthood, and that great and dominant Church” (*The New Freedom*, pp. 82-83).

Let Us Have Moral Courage

The only comment we make is, let us have the moral courage to be Roman Catholics in our actions, social and otherwise, even though in this perverse generation polite society does not consider it the thing. Don't be afraid of that misused word “radical.” It means going to the root of a thing. The Church is the great friend of labor. The true interests of Catholicism are linked up today as never before with the masses. “In order to preserve so desirable a state of things it is absolutely necessary that religion should contrive to possess the affections, and thus rule the conduct of the multitudes.” (Cardinal Gibbons’ *Memorial* to the Holy See.) “A new task is before us. The Church has no longer to deal with Parliaments and princes, but with the masses and with the people. Whether we will or no, this is our work; we need a new spirit and a new law of life.” (Cardinal Manning.) “To lose influence over the people would be to lose the future altogether; and it is by the heart, far more than by the understanding, that we must hold and guide this immense power, so mighty either for good or for evil.” (Cardinal Gibbons.)

“Since the fifth century,” says Ozanam, “a vast number of saints had a greater liking for the Goths and Vandals, the Arian and idolatrous Franks, than for the effeminate Catholics of the Roman cities.” Today, too, honest men have more respect for the suppressed Catholicism of the struggling masses than for that same effeminate type of Catholic, lay or clerical, who are afraid to call their souls their own. “If we cannot evangelize the masses,” said Ozanam, “then we are at the end of the world, and so at the end of all controversy” (*Lettres* II, p. 224). Behold, then, the new apologetic, the watchword of the future: *Passons aux barbares*. Spend yourselves upon the masses.

Article III

The Apostolate of Social Action

We are all familiar with the challenge thrown out to Ozanam at the Paris University by the Saint Simonians and materialists of his day. “You have good reasons,” said they to the young Catholic students, “to talk of the past. There was a time when Christianity worked wonders; but now it is dead. In fact, what are you

doing, you who boast of your Catholicity? Where are your works that prove your faith, that can make us respect and accept it?" Could not millions of the American people ask us the same question today, with as much justice as the socialists of Ozanam's day asked these young Catholic students? This too was the challenge thrown by von Ketteler, "the Bishop of the workingmen," before the assembled Hierarchy of Northern and Southern Germany at the historic Fulda Conference of 1869. He solemnly warned the Episcopate of Germany that if the Church should fail in her leaders in this duty of social action, then should she expect the unbelieving laborer to say to her: "Of what use are your fine teachings to me? What is the good of your referring me by way of consolation to the next world, if in this world you let me and my wife perish with hunger? You are not seeking my welfare, you are looking for something else." Nay, he went on to point out that it was an argument for the divinity of the Church, beautifully understood of the masses of the laboring poor; a proof in works, not in words, that Christ is indeed her Founder: "By solving this problem, which is too difficult for mankind left to its own resources; by accomplishing this work of love, which is the most imperative work of our century; the Church will prove to the world that she is really the institution of salvation founded by the Son of God; for, according to His own words, His disciples shall be known by their works of charity."

The Answer in Deeds

This challenge in the mouth of the infidel workingman must be answered in our day not by words but by deeds. You can point out, if you wish, the countless institutions of Catholic charity. You can show me the lives of thousands of holy men and women who have left all to follow Christ. This is a sufficient argument for me and you that Catholicity is a Divine and living Faith. But the world is not impressed by these evidences, partly because they are so often hidden with Christ in God. It is rather inclined to insist, and ask the Catholic priest, the layman and the Catholic woman in the world, what proof likewise they are prepared to give. Let us repeat it, what are we doing? What are the efforts put forth by us in this great Apostolate of Social Action, perhaps the only one now that is understood by the men and women who do the work of the world?

"Enkindle again the fire of charity," says Ozanam, "and justice will reign upon the Earth." "Interest yourself in the laborer," says Bishop William Emmanuel von Ketteler, "or others will do it in your stead who are hostile to the Church and to Christianity." That is exactly what is taking place all around about us. The writer once addressed a trade and labor association in a neighboring city on The Social Reconstruction Program, issued by the Four American Bishops, constituting the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council. They seemed

lost in trying to understand that this program was no personal private opinion of the speaker. One burly socialist in particular cried out from the back of the hall, in a Swedish accent: "If that is what your Church wants done, then why are the Catholics saying such terrible things about us?" Before the speaker had time to answer, an equally burly Irishman shouted across the hall: "And if that is what our Church wants, why in Hell are the Socialists saying such terrible things about the Roman Catholic Church?" Both the Swede and the Irishman were right from their respective angles. The Church must bring her message to the working masses of the people. If these common people only understood our position on these great burning industrial and social questions of our day and country, our progress would be irresistible. If Catholics only understood the teachings of their Church on these problems, and by word and deed were able to disseminate their beliefs, where would be the grounds of much of the misunderstanding that exists today, in America, about the things that the Catholic Church stands for in this Republic?

The Church and the Social Question

"Can and should the Church help solve the social question?" asked Bishop Ketteler before the assembled Hierarchy at that same historic Fulda Conference. "There is only one answer to this question," he said. "If the Church is powerless here, we must despair of ever arriving at a peaceful settlement of the social problem. The Church can and should help; all her interests are at stake. True, it is not her duty to concern herself directly with capital and industrial activity, but it is her duty to save eternally the souls of men by teaching them the truths of faith, the practice of Christian virtue and true charity. Millions of souls cannot be influenced by her if she ignores the social question and contents herself with the traditional pastoral care of souls. The Church must help to solve the social question, because it is indissolubly bound up with her mission of teaching and guiding mankind."

The Great Questions and Work of the Day

The Catholic Church can help and it will help. She is taking up this great task anew in our day. Her leaders have gauged its vast and urgent importance. The questions that are occupying the minds of men today more than any others are social questions. They are not taken up any more with persons, or politics, or even with what they understand by religion. It has been stated on good authority that over sixty millions of the American people never worship in any church. What are these millions thinking about? The questions that are foremost in their thoughts are the questions of labor, of wages, of industry, of economics. "We must not imagine that we can escape these problems. If men think that they can satisfy the people by

giving them primary assemblies, legislative councils, new magistrates, consuls or a president, they are sadly mistaken” (Ozanam). It is a fact testified to by the head of the United States Secret Service that three hundred and fifty-eight new radical publications have sprung up in the United States in the last year. There are now six hundred and eleven such publications being circulated among the working classes of America. How many Catholic labor papers are being put into the hands of these misguided multitudes?

Making the Judicious Grieve

Verily, it is facts like these, and they could be multiplied indefinitely, that make the judicious grieve, when they hear or read of some erupting patriot on the platform or in the pulpit, wrapping his mental nakedness round in the folds of the Star Spangled Banner, and eternally appealing, through perfervid impassioned outbursts of insular patriotism, to that immortal document – The Constitution of the United States – as the great impregnable bulwark of our Catholic liberties, all the while invincibly oblivious of a most obvious fact, stated clearly in the very preamble to that same Constitution, viz.: “that it was ordained and established by the sovereign people of the United States,” whose breath can unmake it as their breath has made. To put it very bluntly, there is as much of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness guaranteed to Catholics in the American Constitution as our eternal vigilance can keep there. It is one thing to say that majority rule may not be tyrannical, but it is folly to deny that it can, and very often is; and one need not be a great constitutional lawyer to know what a tyrannical and ignorantly bigoted majority may not legally accomplish according to the provisions of Article V of the Constitution of the United States. It can be amended out of existence.

A Witness Cited

We shall call to witness, that what we say is true, one of the greatest Americans that has ever adorned either the public or private life of this great Republic. He is no other than John Ireland, Archbishop of St. Paul. Hear him once again, though his strong, living voice be forever stilled: “My religious faith is that of the Catholic Church – Catholicism, integral and unalloyed – Catholicism, unswerving and soul swaying – the Catholicism, if I am to put it into more positive and concrete form, taught by the supreme chieftain of the Catholic Church, the Bishop, the Pope of Rome.

“My civil and political faith is that of the Republic of the United States of America – Americanism, purest and brightest; yielding in strength and loyalty to the Americanism of none other American; surpassed in spirit of obedience and

sacrifice by that of none other citizen, none other soldier; sworn to uphold in peace and in war America's Star Spangled Banner." What a Catholic! what an American!

And yet great Roman Catholic that he was, great American that he was, he knew full well that *consciences* and not *constitutions* would be the salvation of America and the mainstay of American democracy. "Shall democracy place its reliance upon *laws and lawgivers*? Laws, indeed, have their function in a democratic regime; but laws can never be the mainstay of democracy. In a democratic regime, *laws do not restrain the multitude*. Laws embody the will of the multitude; they reflect the thoughts and the whims of the multitude. Legislatures are the creatures of the people; to a greater or less degree they will be docile to the behests of the people. If the people are corrupt, good laws will not be executed, and evil laws will be enacted; the power of framing laws will be only an instrument of corruption and anarchy. '*Quid leges moribus vanae proficiunt?*' What purpose do laws serve which morals do not vivify? What was true in Rome ages ago is true in America today. . . . Wherein, then, is to be found safety for democracy? Nowhere, if not in a force that resides within the citizen himself, that takes hold of his entire being, fostering what is good, repressing what is evil, and bringing all his energies into subjection to the Supreme Ruler and Master of the World. Naught else but *conscience* can save democracy." (*The Church and Modern Society*, Ireland.)

Let Us Face the Facts

Let us face the facts as they are in America today. Let us not go on drugging ourselves into insensibility. The non-Catholic multitudes do not understand us at all. Most of what they think about us is false. As a matter of fact, they hate us for what we are not, whereas they would be with us if they knew the message we ought to bring to them. Our influence on the great current of American life, in so far as that influence is Catholic, is as if it were not. We boast of our millions of Catholics now living under the flag. Still, we are only a despised and hated sect. A few years ago our opinion on this point received strongest proof in a letter made public by Dr. Peter Guilday of the Catholic University of America. "That there is a Catholic question," he said, "all who have eyes to see can see and all who have ears to hear can hear; and if eight years of serious study of American Catholic history means anything, they have crystallized my belief that instead of becoming more acceptable to the American people of non-Catholic faiths, as the years go by, our Church is feared, detested and hated. If you will allow me to make use of the strongest conclusions my studies have brought to me, I would say that the Catholic Church in the United States is facing a situation today that has no parallel in the past. Fear and hatred we always will have with us. It can hardly be otherwise

where the strides toward extinction as doctrinal religious bodies are so potent today in non-Catholic Church circles.”

Ignorance the Danger

“But there is something more dangerous to Catholic welfare than fear or hatred, and that is ignorance. . . . Any comparison with the anti-Catholic movement of the past will bring out into relief the startling facts that with the passing of the years those non-Catholic organizations that indulge in the national Protestant pastime of baiting Catholics know decidedly less of the Catholic Faith than their predecessors who burnt down convents and churches half a century ago. Ignorance of our Church sits tightly ensconced in non-Catholic circles, but it is not a deliberate ignorance. Non-Catholics want to know, even if the spur of their knowledge be nothing higher than Yankee curiosity.”

But how can we reach these other sheep that should also be in our fold? How can we reach them directly through an apologetic defense of our religion, if the world today, as Pius IX declared, despises alike “our preaching and our priesthood?” We can reach their heads indirectly through our Apostolate of Social Action which will go straight to their hearts. Flank movements are often better strategy in winning objectives in war than the most powerful frontal offensives. Let us prove to the masses that we have as much moral indignation as they have for their social injustices and wrongs. Priests and laymen alike, let us hearken to the challenge of Pius IX: “Let us advance to the conquest of the world by the love of the poor.”

Article IV

The Catholic Platform of Social Action

In our last article we told the story of that Swedish Socialist who was so surprised to hear what the four American Bishops, constituting the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council, had to say, in their Social Reconstruction Program, about the most vexing economic and industrial questions of our day and country. The Bishops used the term Social Reconstruction instead of industrial or economic reconstruction because that is what people generally mean when they speak of the “social question.” The point we wish to make in this article is, that in this Social Reconstruction Program, the Bishops have given us a fairly definite Catholic Social Platform. The average American is wary of that word “platform.” It has been used so often and so successfully by political conventions, to help their grand old parties into power, only to be discarded immediately that consummation has been devoutly attained. It would be a sad thing

if this epoch-making Catholic Social Platform, coming to us from such an authoritative source, should be allowed by the apathy of the Catholic body in America to meet a like fate to that which ordinarily overtakes those other political pronouncements.

Objects and Contents

The object and content of this program of Social Reconstruction are stated very clearly in the Foreword prefacing that important document, signed in their capacity, as the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council, by the four Bishops, Peter J. Muldoon, Bishop of Rockford, Chairman; Joseph Schrembs, Bishop of Toledo, now of Cleveland; Patrick J. (Cardinal) Hayes, Bishop of Tagaste, now Archbishop of New York, and William T. Russell, Bishop of Charleston.

“The ending of the Great War has brought peace,” said the Bishops, “but the only safeguard of peace is social justice and a contented people. The deep unrest so emphatically and so widely voiced throughout the world is the most serious menace to the future peace of every nation and of the entire world. Great problems face us. They cannot be put aside; they must be met and solved with justice to all.”

In the hope of stating the lines that will best guide us in their right solution, the following pronouncement is issued by the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council. Its practical application is of course subject to discussion, but all its essential declarations are based upon the principles of charity and justice that have always been held and taught by the Catholic Church, while its practical proposals are merely an adaptation of those principles and that traditional teaching to the social and industrial conditions and needs of our time.

You will notice that though this program was issued on the 12th of February of the year 1919, the birthday, by the way, of Abraham Lincoln, its authors offer no new or radical panacea for the ills that afflict the social organism of our times. “All its essential declarations are based upon the principles of Charity and Justice,” as old as the Catholic Church. We suppose the Bishops had in mind the long illustrious line of great names which that Church has produced in every age and the contribution their learning and sanctity have made towards the solution of like problems in the different circumstances of times and countries, from the time St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, in that first age when the Church was young, had said: “The superfluities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. They who possess superfluities possess the goods of others,” down to these latter days when Leo XIII, the Pope of Rome, wrote the same indictment from the Chair of Peter: “A small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.” And since they

were American Bishops, perhaps they were thinking, too, of another great reconstruction program given to the American people from the Cemetery of Gettysburg, on the 19th day of November, 1863, because their program was issued on the birthday of Lincoln. Religion and patriotism, the Fathers of our common Church and the fathers of our common country alike, challenge us from out the glorious pages of history, sacred and profane, not to prove recreant in our day to the great causes which they fought for in other times, and have thus far so nobly advanced. In the words of that honest, martyred president: "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion – . . . that this nation, under God – shall have a new birth of freedom – and that government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall not perish from the Earth."

The Unchanging, Undivided Church

It is always the Roman Catholic Church, true to herself because true to her founder. Now it is an Augustine of Hippo, now it is a Pope Clement the Fourth, now it is an Aquinas, greatest of theologians, again it is a Leo XIII, and yet again it is the same old Church that spoke through Augustine when she herself was young, that is speaking to us now in this land so fair, so young, through the mouths of the mitred heads of the sees of Rockford, Toledo, New York and Charleston. They have only reiterated the teachings of Justice and Charity, social justice and social charity, saying that their obligation is so and thus in the present circumstances in our own America.

The program calls for the institution of private property, a more extensive proprietorship; but their economic program in bringing this about calls for things which they properly describe as "involving to a great extent the abolition of the wage system." In this, the program of the Bishops is more advanced and radical than that of the American Federation of Labor. Gompers wants to make Capitalism good; the Bishops want to make it less and finally abolish it.

Dr. Ryan on Capitalism

We cannot help quoting here our former professor at the St. Paul Seminary, now of the Catholic University of Washington, one of the greatest living authorities on Industrial and Social Ethics, whom you shall often hear again before these chapters are completed. "Thank God we Catholics are in no degree responsible for the invention of the cold, ugly, soulless thing called modern capitalism, with its industrial autocracy at the one hand and its proletarian masses at the other. Without the Reformation, the capitalism that we now know would have been, humanly

speaking, impossible.” – Dr. John A. Ryan. “Never again,” says William Hard, “will friend or foe securely call the Roman Catholic Church in America ‘The moral policeman of capitalism’.”

Catholic and Socialist Programs

But you will tell me that the Catholic Social Platform is the same as that of Socialism. Socialists, you will tell me, have one aim, and that is to destroy the present capitalistic system. Are the American Bishops, then, Socialists? Catholicism and Socialism are as wide apart as the poles in their economic aims. Catholicism wants to make every man capable of becoming a capitalist by a more just distribution of the world’s wealth. Why should a few individuals stand, Colossus like, astride of the wealth of the world? says the Catholic economist. Why should not all the wealth of the world be in the hands of one capitalist, and that the bureaucratic State? says the Socialist. To destroy capitalism for the Catholic means to extend the institution of private property. To destroy capitalism for the Socialist is to abolish the institution of private property entirely, by making everybody the slave of the Servile State. The Catholic and Socialistic Platforms can never be confounded by one who knows that capitalism is the greatest enemy of private property, after Socialism itself. Socialism, according to the Bishops, would mean “bureaucracy, political tyranny, the helplessness of the individual as a factor in the ordering of his own life, and general social inefficiency and decadence.” The Church abominates the Monopolistic State ownership of all capital. It fears its powers in other departments besides economics. “Man precedes the State,” says Leo XIII. The American Bishops are bent on keeping him there. Otherwise, we have Socialism and Bolshevism at once. That is just what was wrong with the Oregon School law. It makes the State precede the parent by stealing the primary right of the parent to educate its offspring. Therefore is it an un-Christian law and in being un-Christian it is un-American. And here again Catholics stand four square for the private rights of individuals against the tyranny of the State, even though it be the sovereign state of bigoted Oregon.

The Catholic teaching about the abolition of that cold, ugly, soulless thing called modern capitalism is not Socialism nor the cause of Socialism. We put it squarely up to the so-called smug and respectable conservative, capitalism is the cause and the only cause that will ever bring about Socialism as an economic institution supplanting private ownership. “What has created the philosophy of Socialism, the philosophy of Russian Bolshevism? Archbishop Cerretti, as Assistant Papal Secretary of State, while on a visit to the United States, answered the question just as we answer it, “Capitalism is the father of Socialism.” Popes do not make Bolshevik Archbishops nuncios to Paris! Raymond Robins translated Cerretti’s

phrase into American: “Bolshevism is the legitimate, though unwelcome, son of autocracy.” We would ask the pious conservative then not to go on placing this legitimate, though repudiated, offspring of economic despotism on the doorstep of that good mother of all the blessedness of private property – the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

Ages of Faith

Let us turn back, then, once again to the good old days, the ages of faith, the days of the one universal labor victory recorded in all history. Blessed Middle Ages, how you are despised by so many ignorant men whose brains are addled by the constant waving of the Stars and Stripes in order to gain a little cheap popularity, trying to cater to a perverted current public opinion, by staging periodic outbursts of patriotism in praise of this present day and of its glorious civilization and progress which exist only in the diseased imaginations of men!

In these good old days were born the first Christian trade unions – the craft guilds that afterwards carried to a successful issue the world’s greatest labor movement, the first Christian trade unions that worked out the complete emancipation of the laborer, and maintained him for centuries in industrial and civic independence. They preserved in their own hands, under the sanction of lawful rulers of Church and State, the control of the various trades on which their decent and honest livelihood depended, and established on a solid Christian foundation the dignity of honest labor. In this great Middle Age, the means of production were under the control of the workingmen, and their joint control was exercised over the industries in which they were engaged, and the marketing of their product. This is the goal to which we are trying to aim again, in order to escape again the evils of the Servile State, from which the Church has so often in her history redeemed the workingman. Away, then, ultimately, with the wage-system, away with capitalism! Back to the Middle Ages, back to private property! “No permanent solution of the social question will be obtained until the majority of the wage earners become owners of productive property, preferably and as far as possible in the industries in which they work. Neither high wages nor comfortable working conditions, nor security of employment, nor provisions against all unfavorable contingencies of life, nor all of these together will render the position of the working classes satisfactory if they must continue in that status of dependence which marks the mere wage earner.” – Dr. John A. Ryan, *Catholic Church versus Socialism*, p. 28.

The Ideal Solution

This is the ideal democratic solution of the social problem. How far we are from it can be seen at a glance around you. And still the 100 per center, the *Boobus Americanus*, thinks that he is living in the greatest democracy the world has ever seen, because he learned it in the school histories of the “Land of the Pilgrim’s Pride,” that hated the name of Catholic as much as they hated liberty. Today in rich America the main factor in the production of its huge wealth possess less than five per cent of the total riches of this fair land. Facts are stubborn things. A nation of paupers cannot be free, because a nation of economic slaves cannot cultivate the virtues of freemen. That is what Belloc means by the Servile State. The Catholic Church can buy us from slavery again if we help her to preach her gospel to the poor, disinherited workingman. She has done it over and over again as the history of the workingman has shown us. The strong right hand of God is not shortened in this our day, and the Roman Catholic Church is here again to do it. If through the apathy of clergy and laity she fails, then the Dark Ages have come indeed.

Article V

The Distributive State

In reviewing the Program of Social Action given us so authoritatively by the American Hierarchy, we took from their platform first that plank which seems to us most mediaeval and therefore most Catholic. It is most ultimate and fundamental because people thought deeply in these Middle Ages and they were never satisfied until they discovered a strong philosophical foundation for their convictions that satisfied their natural craving for comprehensive thinking. The most fundamental thing, then, in the Bishop’s program is, “that the majority must somehow become owners, or at least in part, of the instruments of production.” The majority of the workers must not remain mere wage-earners. The wage system is the very cornerstone of Capitalism. Ultimately, therefore, somehow Capitalism must go.

A Hard Saying

For many Catholics even, this is a hard saying, because many Catholics today do not think as hard, or lay the foundations of their beliefs as deep, as they were wont to do, in these ages which only yesterday we used to consider dark. Capitalism must go! and we used to think that it was as necessary to civilization and progress as the very air we breathe is to our human life. The Bishops tell us even how it can be done. “They can be enabled to reach this stage gradually through co-operative

productive societies, and co-partnership arrangements. In the former, the workers own and manage the industries themselves; in the latter, they own a substantial part of the corporate stock, and exercise a reasonable share in the management. However slow the attainment of these ends, they will have to be reached, before we can have a thoroughly efficient system of production, or an industrial and social order that will be secure from the danger of revolution. It is to be noted that this particular modification of the existing order, though far-reaching and involving to a great extent the abolition of the wage system, would not mean the abolition of private ownership. The instruments of production would still be owned by individuals, not by the state.” Who would ever think that in order to make our industrial and social order safe from the danger of revolution, capitalism somehow must make way for co-operative productive societies, and co-partnership in the ownership of the instruments of production!

Capitalism a Menace

Capitalism is a very menace to civilization because until these mediaeval things are substituted for it, we cannot be secure from the danger of revolution, according to the Bishops. Our objective then, through this ultimate and fundamental reform, is not a capitalistic, or socialistic, but a distributive state. The distributive state existed in Europe when Europe was Christendom. In this state alone can true industrial democracy exist. The capitalistic state is a by-product of Reformation philosophy and theology. The socialistic state will be a product of the new paganism that is rapidly replacing protestantism, unless Catholicity in America has enough vitality left to restore all things in Christ; for outside the true Christian Church there cannot exist a spirit of true Christian democracy.

It is very important, then, before going further to get clear ideas on these very fundamental things. So we shall define what we mean by a capitalistic, a socialistic, and a distributive state; and show that the Church realized the last when Catholic ideals dominated the civilization of the Middle Ages. We shall show how the Church is opposed alike to capitalism and socialism, and therefore it is, that any really Catholic platform of Social Action demands reforms so fundamental as to make the present capitalistic state, as well as the threatened future socialistic state, permanent impossibilities, and to bring into being slowly indeed, but surely, a distributive state, where property will be well-divided among the great majority of its citizens, looking ultimately to realize her true ideal condition of industrial democracy, by achieving once again what was formerly a reality, the ideal Christian, because Catholic, Collectivist State.

Not Opposed to Wealth

Be it well understood, however, that the Church is not opposed to wealth as such. But the Church is opposed to wealth in the hands of a small minority of the citizens of any state, while the great majority are completely deprived of any private property whatsoever. As a matter of fact, man could not exist without wealth. Man, in order to live, must transform his environment to his physical and mental needs and use. He is eternally engaged in transforming his environment from a condition where it is less conducive to supplying his needs to a condition where it is more conducive and subservient in supplying them. The intelligent and creative faculty of man consciously and thoughtfully transforming his environment to suit his peculiar human wants is called the Production of Wealth. Man could not live upon the Earth without creating satisfaction for these particular human needs. A certain kind, and a certain amount, of human wealth is essential in order that man may merely live. These are called the bare necessities of life. He goes on from this minimum bread line to the production of all those things which improve his lot in life, until he reaches a state where his physical and psychic wants are satisfied, by what we call the luxuries of life. Thus we can exist on a mere pittance sufficient to procure a bare sustenance, and we can live on certain forms of elaborately prepared viands, clothing, fuel and habitation, which may be only within the reach of very wealthy individuals. To control wealth, then, is to control human life itself. A man, then, who by the laws of his country or the accepted economic distribution of wealth, is refused the opportunity of producing wealth enough to satisfy his rational human wants reasonably, is a man who is refused an opportunity to live up to the full stature of human life.

The Production of Wealth

The forces of nature around us constitute our environment. Wealth can only be produced in order that men live, by the application of human energy, physical and mental, to these forces and the material world which these forces inform. This human energy applied to transforming the material world and its forces we call labor. The material and forces transformed is called land. Labor and land are therefore the two principal and original factors in the production of wealth. But the conscious ingenuity and intelligent action of man upon nature and its forces proceed to create artificial methods of varying and increasing complexity for the production of wealth., These we may call the implements of production, the machinery and tools which labor uses. Production takes time in turning out the finished product. In the meantime the producer, who is mostly the laborer, must be fed and clothed and housed. There must be a reserved stock, then, somewhere to

support all these human lives, during its effort to produce wealth, to be used at a future day. These instruments of production, these stores of food, and other provisions, set aside and reserved, are necessary in varying degrees, according to the simplicity or complexity of the economic society here and now engaged in the production of wealth. This reserved wealth stored up and set aside for the purposes of future production, and not for any immediate needs of consumption, be it in the form of tools, machines, factories, stores for the maintenance of labor in fitness for the processes of production, or money to furnish wages for labor to buy these necessities, we define as capital.

Three Factors

We have then in our present economic system three great and independent factors in the production of wealth, viz.: Labor, of production they mean only Land and Capital or both combined. When people say that the majority of our citizens are dispossessed of the means of production, they mean that the majority are not free to produce wealth, except by the leave of the few, who own all the land and all the capital. The majority are at present only masters of their own labor, and exercise no control over capital, or land, or any combination of both. The majority therefore are not economically free, no matter how much we boast of our political freedom. We shall have a good deal to say of this so-called political freedom later on.

Political freedom in America today, then, only means that a man has a right before the law of the land to work or not work, when he pleases, but his political freedom gives him no legal right to control over any appreciable or useful amount of the means of production. He is scarcely a citizen. A better name for him would be a proletarian, and the mass of the workers might be called the proletariat.

Private property signifies that wealth, and this includes the means of production, be in the control of persons, or groups of persons, other than political bodies governing the state. The individual, then, in order to own private property, must be able to control it, and exercise that control to his own advantage as an individual, not as a trustee for society as a political institution. A society where the means of production would be in the hands of the political governors of the community is generally called *the social state*. That gives us an accurate enough conception of socialism for our purposes here.

The capitalist state, on the contrary, believes in the private property ownership of land and capital, and therefore of the control of the means of production; provided that property and control is vested in a small number of free citizens, while the big mass have no such ownership or control, and are therefore a disinherited proletariat. In the production of wealth in such a state, and all our great

modern states are capitalistic fundamentally, some more and some less, there are two great factors, capital and labor, and of the total wealth produced the proletariat receives only a small portion.

A Freedom Threatened

At present, the proletariat is politically free to withhold its labor, but there is a well defined tendency in legislation today to deprive the proletariat of that last remnant of freedom. President Harding's message to Congress a few years ago suggested the legal abolition of this freedom in certain trades and occupations. When that is made universal, then we have the Servile State established here, in what we used to call in our Fourth of July speeches, "The Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave"!

The Servile State has been well defined by Belloc as, "that arrangement of society in which a considerable number of the families and individuals are constrained by positive law to labor for the advantage of other families and individuals." Is it not a sad irony of fate that this compulsory labor, whether enacted by positive law or enforced by the destruction of unionism, is called "The American Plan"?

The Ideal

The distributive State which is the Church's objective is that arrangement of society, where the great majority, if not possibly all the citizens, own and control some wealth, including the means of production. That means economic freedom as well as political liberty. That is the consummation, devoutly to be wished, of all our struggles. There are no countries in the world today where this condition is more needed than in the two so-called Anglo-Saxon democracies. England and America are no longer economically free. Nineteen-twentieths of England's population are dispossessed, according to a very conservative estimate, of capital and land. One third of her population are indigent. The United States is in a similar plight. George K. Holmes estimated in 1890 that 91 per cent of the families owned only 29 per cent of the wealth, and 9 per cent of the families owned 71 per cent of the wealth. From the 1910 census it has been computed that 3 per cent of the families own 90 per cent of the wealth, leaving 97 per cent of the families of great, rich America with 10 per cent of the country's wealth.

Article VI

The Social Question Is None of Our Business?

One hears it said sometimes by enemies of the Church that the social question is none of her business, that no Pope or Council has ever made a definite pronouncement on the social question, that the war of Capital and Labor is their own war. Sometimes even Catholics have been quoted to this effect. But whether Catholic or anti-Catholic, they are the kind that always have some private axe to grind, and what are the interests of the Church, and what the interests of truth, against that sharp, crooked edge, that tries to cut its devious way to an end, which selfish, unconscionable minds practically persuade themselves as justifying the most lying means? But the Church goes on her triumphant way divinely conscious that woe is hers if she preach not her Master's gospel, that same Divine Master who hesitated not, even in presence of His enemies, who had come out to apprehend Him, to rebuke sternly even a priest of His own Church, in the most scathing verse of the New Testament: "And Jesus said to him, Judas, dost thou betray the son of man with a kiss?" Luke xxii:48. And everything that is written in that Holy Book was written for our edification. Our Lord was sold by one of his own anointed ones for thirty pieces of silver. How often do we not see the interests of His Church betrayed for the very crumbs that fall from the table of a Social Avenue supper?

Note These Names

Oh, indeed, so Leo XIII has never spoken, nor Pius X, nor Benedict XV, nor the Bishops of Germany, nor the Bishops of France, and of England, and of Ireland, and Cardinal Gibbons never uttered even a word on this social question, nor Cardinal Manning, nor the Bishop of the Workingmen, William Emmanuel von Ketteler, and the combined American Hierarchy have never issued a Joint Pastoral containing pronouncements on the social question, and in their name the four American Bishops, constituting the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic War Council, have never given us *The Program of Social Reconstruction*, and we suppose that in Catholic Moral Theology classes professors are warned by their Bishops to put the soft pedal on the seventh commandment, and to avoid extraneous matter so punctiliously, as never to mention the treatise on Justice and Right, or Restitution, and Confessors never tell their poor penitents in contrite heart, "unless you give back these fifteen or twenty dollars you stole, I must refuse you absolution," and we suppose that rustling silk at the slide would be punished by some stern ecclesiastical Hildebrand, in having to recite the latter half of the Angelic Salutation, for deigning to put over a crooked deal involving widows and

orphans in financial ruin, to the extent of millions of dollars? Forsooth, the Catholic Church has no definite teaching on the social question?

A Very Definite Message

Yes, indeed, in spite of this fade-away apologetic Catholic attitude, the Catholic Church has a very definite social message, which is of interest to all mankind. It is no mere theoretical message either, but of that hard, practical stuff that has enabled her to solve the greatest of social problems in the past. With this experience of her social history extending over two decades of centuries, is it not most sweetly reasonable to expect that her social lessons now are of equal importance? In her burning desire to be of service to all, she does put forth a simple, plain exposition of Catholic morality and does wish the application of her general principles to industrial and social and economic historic facts. The great living, teaching Church is not a faint, fearful, uncertain *vox et praeterea nihil*. Rather does it evidence a strong, massive, fearless stand with regard to the fundamental problems of modern life, putting before the changing world her unchanging principles of Social Justice and Christian Charity.

In our short span of life we happen to be at a turning point of history. We have seen Empires going to pieces over night. But the Church has been at these cross-roads time and again; prepared to take a leading part now, as she has gloriously done in equally critical periods of history. The Catholic Church is like a family doctor in a crisis. She knows the social patient from its infancy. Directed by twenty centuries of accumulated wisdom, she prescribes the preservation of whatever is true or noble in modern civilization, and wishes the rightful development of every just democratic ideal. And this seems a providentially propitious time for the Catholic Church to challenge the attention of the world, Catholic and non-Catholic. After all, the ills of our Capitalistic society are new evils, caused, by a cold, ugly thing, born into the modern world as a result of Industrial and Religious Revolution.

Prodigal-like, after feeding on husks there is perceptible a stirring among the nations and the masses, that might some day become articulate in accents as penitential and contrite as those of the swine-herd, who had wasted his substance living riotously, "And returning to himself, he said, How many hired servants in my father's house abound with bread, and I here perish with hunger? I will arise, and will go to my father, and say to him: Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy son." Luke xv:17-19. And if we divine aright the genius of the Church today, with regard to these things under discussion, she, never more than now, has no place for the reactionary Bourbon, lay or clerical, ruler or politician, who would reject the advances of this prodigal

humanity returning again to its father's house, asking for the bread of leadership and direction and being offered sometimes the cold stone of indifference in its material and moral hunger. Rather does she encourage the man who, imitating the forgiving father, welcomes back the erring son, "And rising up he came to his father, and, when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and, running to him, fell upon his neck and kissed him." Luke xv:20.

The Ailment

We believe with Father Plater, S. J., "that the working classes of this country are suffering from suppressed Catholicism. The old pre-Reformation instincts for freedom and security have broken the husk of an un-Christian economic theory and practice." What he wrote of England is equally true of America and of the entire world. The numbness of death is already on the extremities of a social order that never brought much warmth into the lives of men. We salute it about to die as the Church saluted the falling Empire of the Caesars, as she saluted, centuries later, the economic system of Feudalism about to expire. The Church, ever ancient, ever young, will be in the van of true progress if, as we think, humanity has struck its tents and is on the march to a more just and equitable order in the distribution of the world's goods, to a civilization which will find room in the world for God and his Church from whose house it went out in the Sixteenth Century into the far country of apostasy in industrial and religious revolt. The whole world is in a state of unrest and travail.

Grounds for Hope

But students of the signs of the times see many grounds for hope. Father Husslein, S. J., in his work, *The World Problem, Capital, Labor, and the Church*, has this to say of it: "Suppressed Catholicism is at the heart of the labor movement. Suppressed Catholicism is at the center of the great social unrest. Suppressed Catholicism is the spirit struggling for liberation beneath the crackling, breaking, bursting shell of an unnatural and unchristian social order. It is the pre-Reformation spirit of social freedom, which the Church alone can prevent from degenerating into lawlessness or injustice once it has achieved its liberation."

In opposing the capitalistic state, therefore, the Bishops' program of reconstruction is no novel solution of our industrial problems. It is rather the beginning of a Catholic economic Renaissance which is not confined to forward-looking Churchmen in any one country. And we must repeat it again that opposition to Capitalism is the direct opposite of all the aims of Socialism.

The Church is opposed to both alike. "The Church does not make common cause with Socialism in its opposition to private capital, nor would the labor movement ever do so, unless deceived or betrayed by false leaders. But the Church is opposed, in the most unqualified way, to the selfish spirit of rationalistic capitalism that sprang into being after the Reformation and continued in its development until the great World War. There is no possible defense of a system which permitted the accumulation of mountainous fortunes by a few clever and often highly unscrupulous financiers who held in their hands the fate of millions of their fellow-men, and had in their grasp the power of the press by which they formed the opinions of the very people who helplessly looked to them for their dole of daily bread." *The World Problem, Capital, Labor and the Church*, Joseph Husslein, S. J.

What the American Catholic wants most in this crisis of our history is a spinal column. We have too many lay and clerical jelly-fish Catholics, who seem prepared to carry the spirit of compromise so far as apologizing for the plain rights of Almighty God on this Earth which He created. The time has come, too, to cease making excuses for the Catholic Church. We would like to see around us the type of Roman Catholic who would know the true genius and lineaments of that Divine Institution so thoroughly as to feel a thrill of pride in being a member of it, and when occasion required it, who wouldn't be ashamed to tell the world the why and wherefore of that just pride.

One Great Truth

If the economic history of the Church teaches one great truth, it is that the Catholic Church is a great living force in the world, vivifying every institution that makes for a better civilization, a moral power that is able to save dying civilizations one after another, because she has the courage to abandon hopelessly decadent ones. We like to listen rather to these sterling Catholics of the type of Godfried Kurth, the great Belgian historian, picturing the Church renewing her faith so gloriously, while empires crumble about her. "Letting the dead bury their dead, letting crumble behind her the moldering edifice of Roman civilization, the Catholic Church, as we have seen, went to the barbarians and confided to them her destinies. Established in their midst, choosing from them co-laborers, such as St. Boniface, Charlemagne, Alfred the Great, she went forth from the first day and made preparation for the creation of a new world" (*L'église aux tournants de l'histoire*).

We have come again to such another turning point of history. What will the Church do? What she has always done. What Pius X told the priests of the world to do. She will save the world from Bolshevism and Socialism and anarchy, by

restoring all things in Christ. And is there a citizen so dead to every sense of patriotic emotion as to think that our own America is not a country worth saving with its promises once so fair for civilization and humanity? What American in his patriotic hopes has not been thrilled by Longfellow's sublime apostrophe to this young Republic?

Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!
 Sail on, O Union, strong and great!
 Humanity with all its fears,
 With all the hopes of future years,
 Is hanging breathless on thy fate!
 We know what Master laid thy keel,
 What Workman wrought thy ribs of steel,
 Who made each mast, and sail, and rope,
 What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
 In what a forge and what a heat,
 Were shaped the anchors of thy hope!
 Fear not each sudden sound and shock
 'Tis of the wave and not the rock;
 'Tis but the flapping of the sail,
 And not a rent made by the gale!
 In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
 In spite of false lights on the shore,
 Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea!
 Our hearts, our hopes, are all with thee,
 Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
 Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
 Are all with thee, – are all with thee!

Article VII

On Being a Mediaevalist

A few years ago, to be a mediaevalist was considered a term of reproach. One reason for this queer phase of current public opinion was the scarcity of mediaevalists, and Napoleon, you know, is not the only one that thought God to be always on the side of the big battalions. We remember when there was only one in Minnesota that we were acquainted with. Mediaevalism is becoming so respectable now that soon it will be almost a cult. By mediaevalism, of course we don't mean the trimmings of a cassock, or a taste for Gothic vestments, though we should like to see its fine spirit flowering out into a thousand strange fashions, of new forms

and colors, that display a healthy revolt against the drab uniformity of pale, sickly, commonplace, standardized modernity.

The Reconstruction Program of the American Hierarchy, therefore, is a great step forward for the cause of Mediaevalism, especially the plank advocating a distributive state. It is not at all so impossible to wake up some morning and find the whole world Mediaeval. This is not a thought fathered by some idle dream. The best thinkers of Europe today are mediaevalists. The same is true of America. Its spirit is manifest not in any one department of art, or letters, or economics, but “from Paganized architecture to a new Gothic; from Byron to Francis Thompson; from the Manchester School to a revived guild system; from Spencer’s Synthetic Philosophy to Sacramentalism; from ‘Triumphant Democracy’ to a new vision of the kingly ideal and a vital aristocracy; from a centrifugal and negative Protestantism to a centripetal and unified Catholicism – in all these directions the new spirit was showing itself, though sometimes hiddenly and with little consciousness of its own significance as a part of a whole that was greater.

“In a sense, it was ‘false dawn’ for thereafter Modernism went on to even greater triumphs, while the specific movements themselves came, some of them, to an ignominious end. Now, however, as a result of recent revelations, we know both the need and the significance of a thing that once seemed whimsical and episodic, and again we take up the smoking torch, cast down in weariness and failure. It is no less than Christian civilization we have to restore.” (Ralph Adams Cram.)

The Most Logical Thing

After all, it is the most logical thing in the world to go back to the Middle Ages for our Industrial and Social Ethics. Leo XIII sent the whole teaching Church back to the thirteenth century for its Philosophy and Theology in his Encyclical Letter, *Aeterni Patris*, August 4, 1879, on the Study of Scholastic Philosophy. “We exhort you Venerable Brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences.” Now that Popes and Bishops are asking us to go back to Aquinas Ethicus, as well as Aquinas Metaphysicus, it is only reasonable to expect a very stampede for the Mediaeval band-wagon.

We like to dwell then on the special significance of this movement, since it is not any mere isolated fact in the effort to restore industrial and social equilibrium, but we think rather a part of what will soon be a great living triumphant world-wide Catholic Renaissance, built up around this solid centerpiece of an ideal industrial democracy. In a word, we are helping in a movement that means no less than the restoration of Christian civilization.

Men whose minds are narrowed by contemporary conventions are inclined to accuse such workers and thinkers of being merely theoretical and romantic reactionaries. As a matter of historical fact, it is the satisfied Babbitistic modern mind that is really in revolt against a stable order, religiously, socially and economically. The modern mind has been in industrial and religious revolt since the sixteenth century. Take away that continued modern revolution, and continuity with our settled historic past is again established.

Certain things were normal and natural conditions in the religious and economic life of Europe until the Reformation. We are trying to reconstruct these normal and natural conditions in so far as they have been destroyed by the violent and abnormal disasters that overtook Europe four hundred years ago. We are getting back to normalcy in a sense very different from that intended by front porch best minds. A stable social ideal existed in the Middle Ages. We think that the mass of mankind in all ages wants such an ideal. It was at its best in Mediaeval times. How sensibly reasonable, therefore, to be a Mediaevalist.

A Contradiction

Is it not a rather strange contradiction that such a one is considered behind the times by the so-called progressive modern mind? The average modern really thinks so, because he or she or it, as the case may be, does not know what is behind the times. After all, may it not be the progressive modernists who are behind the times? Modern times have produced wonderful pieces of machinery, say, a Great Northern freight engine or a Ford car. Are these things such great steps forward indeed? Suppose for a minute that either of these pieces of machinery could get, by some flight of imagination, into Heaven, and rattled past St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine, engaged in conversation (in good Latin) about the Blessed Trinity, or Grace, or any of the hundred and one things that interested men in these good old times, what do you think these two giant minds would think of it? If the modern attitude or, better, pose, is correct, they would say, "Well, well, we did not know much in our days, indeed. See this wonderful thing that has come to pass in Detroit." If the Mediaevalist is correct in his attitude, they would be annoyed for a minute or two by the noise, and then would go on talking of the wisdom of storing up treasures for Heaven, which such rust will never consume.

The modern successors of Augustine and Thomas can glory in their Fords, and waste hour after hour discussing its complicated and mysterious insides, not in Latin, but good, respectable slang, and public opinion considers them hard-headed, practical, successful ministers of a new age, looking down in self-satisfied contempt at those dreamers who are only interested in such trivialities as restoring again the spirit of another civilization which never rose to the great heights of

creating a Ford roadster, but was satisfied with such trifles as the *Summa Theologica*, and the *Divina Commedia*, and Ely, and Winchester, and Durham, and Canterbury, and Paris, and Oxford, and Rheims and Burgos, and all the beautiful abbeys with all their beautiful liturgy, and over them all brooding the great Benedictine Pax, and all the beautiful paintings, and sculpture, and stained glass, and needlework, and enamel, and the crafts of the goldsmith and wood-carver and bell-founder, all wrought, into a divine perfection to give as much glory as men could to their Creator who has now to be satisfied with a twenty-minute low Mass every Sunday, in this great progressive age of prosperous and complacent stupidity.

A Regrettable Thing

The really sad thing about this return to the spirit of Mediaevalism which is now taking so many forms in Catholic and non-Catholic movements, is that the great mass of Catholics in America and a vast number of their clergy also, and that the loudest part of it, seem to be completely oblivious of its very existence. Listen to conversations on the point casually and see if this statement is due to any extravagant imagination or not.

Some of the shallowest remarks we have ever heard made by self-constituted critics have been made *apropos* of this conscious and unconscious trend Mediaeval-ward. Some think that the restoration of Christian civilization as it existed for three or four hundred years of the Middle Ages would mean the switching off of electric lights and heaters! Others think it would entail the abolition of golf and the substitution of Archery! While yet others are so delightfully dense in their ignorant criticism as to be contented with the groundless platitude which they disprove every time that they set their alarm clocks – “after all, you cannot put back the hands of the clock.”

As a matter of historic fact, to be proved later, the only things industrially and socially successful in the way of reconstructive economic experiment in the last twenty years, are the very things considered impractical and impossible by ignorant and stupid critics who are ever as ready with destructive advice as they are fearful of the painful processes of cerebration. As a matter of fact also, and all are unconscious of this point, it is only the present industrial capitalistic system that is impossible. Right now we are living in a state of industrial collapse. There is no hope for the future unless we are able to restore the past. Capital and Labor, being in a state of actual war, take different views, naturally. Radical labor looks to the millenium under Socialism or Bolshevism. Capital looks to the Servile State where all labor will be legally at their mercy. On which side are you, Roman

Catholics? You are gored on either horn of this dilemma. Where and how can you escape?

The American Hierarchy have given you the cue. There is a golden mean, where virtue always walks serene. There is the Distributive State. In other words, we must turn back the hands of the clock, and set our alarm to wake us up at the first safe stop in our journey to the City of God. There is no fourth way, dear readers. We will give you here a piece of gratuitous advice; before it is too late, become an intelligent Mediaevalist. There is nothing logically left for you, if you reject our advice, but to go over boldly into the camp of the Bourbon, or the Bolshevik. It is simply a choice for you to make. Restore Christian civilization, or wreck it.

The World Groping

We said that the world is today, consciously and unconsciously, groping to gather up the threads of a lost tradition in many different departments of human endeavor. "The Catholic Spirit has been, and is, hard at work in modern English literature. By 'Catholic' is meant here nothing sectarian or narrowly controversial, but instead the broad, traditionally Christian outlook upon life which through many centuries molded European society into all but its ultra-modern forms. It antedated the agnostic and it superseded the pagan; it was both the enemy and the lover of Rome. Although inherently artistic, it condemned art for its own sake.

"We shall not try to account for it or to make an apology for what is so obvious that it has been ignored. Catholic art raised every structure worth looking at that has been built since the days of the Parthenon and the Capitol; wrote the *Divina Commedia*, the *Morte d'Arthur*, and, to some extent at least, the plays of William Shakespeare. It erected, finally, a social order in which the art of living was possible. There was nothing wooden or pedantic about it anywhere but instead a surprising vitality, as of old Adam forgetting his age; yet it stood like a rock on two points – belief in God and in Man.

"Theology and politics were written into its poetics. No workman in whom the Catholic Spirit breathed would have admitted that religion can be excluded from life and art. Christianity sent thousands of its representatives to death for a Roman holiday; it carried armies over pestilential wastes to the conquest of a blighted town; it was everywhere alarmingly reckless of life; but it tried honestly to make that life worth the trouble. Woman believed and was honored; the slave was freed and the king became a slave. And from one end of Christendom to the other, the *Miserere* ended in a chorus of laughter.

A Spirit Departed

“Gradually, that spirit died out of the world and its sacred temples were profaned. During nearly four hundred years of English history, it was reviled and spit upon, and then it returned, disguised at first, cautiously showing its face to friends until it had once more the right to sit in the market-place. It entered into the literature of England, wherever men lived again in the past of Christendom, wherever souls yearned for the faith and blessed peace that were symbolized by the spires of Lincoln and Canterbury, wherever the spell of modern pessimism was broken by sacramental mirth. Occasionally, the hovels of the poor were shaken, and it got inside the gates of Oxford. Poets were thrilled with the rich music of mediaeval life, and thinkers battled with modern thought, clad in the armor of the schools. The world was shaken with memories, and though many were heedless or distrustful or filled with rancor, those who loved them were given new courage and new vigor. They chanted songs that had long been forgotten and voiced hopes that had been changed into despair. While the world about them reeled in the din of its delusion, they stood serene; and when they wept, their tears were pure. But they themselves shall tell the story of how they came to know the splendid continuity of Christendom, its interest in the fate of man, its trust in God.” (*The Catholic Spirit in Modern English Literature*, by George N. Shuster, Ph. D.)

A Great Army

We hear the measured tread of a grand army on the march. Bands are playing, drums beating, and colors flying. Great Popes are leading us in person, and Bishops who have vision are cheering us on our way. The voice of the Church, giving the word of command, rings clearly through the air – the voice of the Catholic Church in modern industrial and social problems, hearkening back to the days of lost tradition. The peoples are stirring, looking everywhere for leading as well as light. We are the last Church of the West to retain the affections of the toiling poor. We are on the shore of the lost ocean. The whole world awaits us. May no historian of the present ever write of us hereafter that it was we who failed it.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH, THE PAGAN SLAVE AND THE CHRISTIAN SERF

Article VIII

Church and Labor in Apostolic Preaching

At this point, we consider it necessary to take a rapid historic glance at the attitude of the Church towards labor, from the time two thousand years ago when that Church, that has since become so great, so glorious, was but a tiny infant, small as a little mustard seed in Galilee. We shall be enabled to see clearly from the economic history of the Church that the Christian civilization which we are now trying to restore was gradually built up as a result of the victorious struggle carried on by the Church against pagan ethics which, if made a rule of conduct, would have enabled Capitalism in every age to degrade, and finally enslave, labor.

“And the eleven disciples went into Galilee, unto the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And seeing him, they adored; but some doubted. And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying, All power is given to Me in Heaven and in Earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.” (Mark xxviii, 16-20.)

Who will ever know all the things that Jesus told these poor Seminarians whom now he commissioned to go forth and preach His Gospel to the nations of the whole world, and for all time? No wonder the Catholic Church in all ages speaks like one having authority to teach. She is conscious that her teachings is the Word of God, and that her mission to the world has the greatest of all credentials. She was sent by the Son of God Himself from that mountain side in Galilee. Only eleven of them for all the world – the great, big, corrupt, pagan world!

According to the Official Catholic Directory for 1925, we have in America alone 23,697 priests. We were all ordained for the same work and sent by our Bishops into the world to preach the same Gospel as was delivered to the eleven.

There were twelve called at first, but one of them who carried the purse, had meanwhile gone to his own place. He was a great business man, and his name was Judas Iscariot. One of the feats of high finance, excogitated by his capitalistic genius, was the sale of his Lord and Master for thirty pieces of silver. Twenty-three thousand six hundred and ninety-seven of us for one country alone, and eleven apostles for all the world! And the young Church was deeply conscious that a heavy obligation weighed upon it to do what Jesus told it to do, through the eleven. "And Peter, rising up in the midst of the brethren," told them what would happen to priests and Bishops who were faithless to their charge. "For it is written in the Book of Psalms: Let their habitation become desolate, and let there be none to dwell therein. And his bishoprick let another take." (Acts, ch. 1, 15, 20.)

The First Preaching

And St. Peter, the first Pope of Rome, the greatest Roman Catholic that ever lived, preached a great sermon to the people in Jerusalem, the first that was preached, in fulfillment of that divine commission, to go and teach the world, after the days of Pentecost were accomplished. And Peter, because he was an honest man, and knew that Jesus meant what He said, was not afraid to irritate those present, who would be sure to object to his Gospel message. Because there were present many hostile elements in that vast congregation, "Parthians and Medes, and Elamites, and inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphilia, Egypt, and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews also, and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, . . . and they were all astonished, and wondered, saying one to another: What meaneth this?" (Acts II, 9-12). And immediately the propagandists against the infant Church got busy. And others, mocking, said: "These men are full of new wine" (Acts II, 13). But Peter was not to be silenced so easily. He made that mistake once before, but he would never make it again. He was the same Peter, poor, honest St. Peter, who had denied three times that he ever knew Our Lord, when that same Divine Lord, humanly speaking, wanted his sympathy so much. "Whom, when a certain servant-maid had been sitting at the light, and had earnestly beheld him, she said: 'This man also was with him.' But he denied him, saying: 'Woman, I know him not'." (Luke xxii, 56-57),

The Daring of Peter

How many ministers of the Gospel since that sad night have forgotten also their apostolic intrepidity, sitting by the firesides of the great and powerful and basking in the light that radiates, siren-like, from the fascinating displays of alluring and

bewitching plutocratic femininity? But Peter, redeeming his former weakness, rose up like a lion to defend his fellow priests from this cowardly attack made by the enemies of the Church, and accused these calumniators openly of deicide. “This same (Jesus) being delivered up, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you by the hands of wicked men have crucified and slain” (Acts II, 23). He immediately carried the attack into his enemies’ territory, asking them in an eloquent peroration to “save yourselves from this perverse generation.” If St. Peter preached a sermon like that today in some of our fashionable metropolitan churches, how imprudent his remarks would be considered! The foolish things of this world verily hath God chosen to confound the worldly wise. And, by the way, one effect of that supremely irritating sermon was that “there were added (to the Church) in that day about three thousand souls.” And, by the way also, Peter’s success silenced his calumniators quite a bit, for we are told “that a great fear fell on all.” The success of honest men always has this effect on mean, dishonest calumniators.

And, by the way again, and we want this point to go home directly, Peter tried his hand that very first day, that the Gospel was openly preached in the streets of Jerusalem, at establishing a distributive state. Is it not a strange thing that the Holy Roman Catholic Church began to interfere with the established order so soon? Would you not think they would have waited at least for a week or two? How mighty cautious and prudent we have become about stepping on the toes of established and entrenched corruption, in these latter days, when faith and fervor alike have grown so cold. “And all they that believed were together, and had all things common. Their possessions and goods they sold, and divided them to all, according as everyone had need.” (Acts II, 44-45.)

A Striking Coincidence

Now that we have struck this social ethic vein, it is well that we draw your attention to a striking coincidence. Christ told the apostles to preach everything that He had commanded them, and that He would be with them all days even unto the consummation of the world. One of the first effects of Peter’s preaching on his converts was that those who had goods and possessions sold them in order to divide up more evenly, so that no one would be in need. A strange thing is that the first sermon or spiritual conference given by Our Lord to His seminarians was on this very same thing. St. Luke tells the story of the incident beautifully.

We like to meditate on the dealings of Christ with these seminarians because we think that if seminarians were trained today as Christ trained His, perhaps it would affect very noticeably the quality of their Gospel message afterwards, to a generation whom we can truly call as perverse, as that to which St- Peter spoke in

his day. By close contact in the class room, in the chapel, in the prayer hall, we have learned to appreciate the high, sterling, moral fiber of young American seminarians. We know their young, generous natures would readily respond to the challenge of some new crusader spirit, who would open their eyes again to the beauty and the glory of apostolic Christianity in contradiction to the slough of despond and dry rot that at present passes current in the world we live in as the ministry of the word pure and undefiled.

“And when day was come (Jesus had spent all the night before in the prayer of God), He called unto Him His disciples; and He chose twelve of them (whom also He named Apostles). And coming down with them, He stood in a plain place, and the company of His disciples, and a very great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and the seacoast both of Tyre and Sidon. And He, lifting up His eyes on His disciples, said: ‘Blessed are ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are ye that hunger now; for you shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for you shall laugh. Blessed shall ye be when men shall hate ye, and when they shall separate ye, and shall reproach ye, and cast out your name as evil, for the son of man’s sake. Be glad in that day and rejoice; for behold, your reward is great in Heaven. For according to these things did their fathers to the prophets. But woe to you that are rich; for you have your consolation. Woe to you that are filled; for you shall hunger. Woe to you that now laugh; for you shall mourn and weep. Woe to you when men shall bless you. For according to these things did their fathers to the false prophets. . . . Give and it shall be given to you; good measure and pressed down and shaken together and running over shall they give into your bosom. For with the same measure that you shall mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.’ And He spoke to them also a similitude: Can the blind lead the blind? Do they not both fall into the ditch? . . . And why call you Me Lord, Lord; and do not the things which I say?’ “ (Luke VI, 13-26, 38-39, 46.)

The Teaching and Preaching Divine

There is the sermon before the multitudes from the wealthy cities and the plains. The preacher was Our Lord, and the twelve apostles were brought along from the seminary in order that they, too, when their time came, might know what to say to the rich who had everything, and the poor who had nothing. We heard a distinguished speaker say, some few years ago, that if Lincoln delivered his Gettysburg speech in St. Paul during the late war to end all war, for democracy and the rights of small, weak nations, that he would now be enjoying the hospitality of the federal government in Leavenworth. I wonder, if seminarians heard a conference like that often, what would be the social complexion of our future clergy? Still, it is true that everything that is written was written for our edification.

There is where the apostles got the power that changed the pagan world, because, like their Master, they were not afraid to preach Christianity, no matter who was in the audience. "For if I preach the Gospel, it is no glory to me; for a necessity lieth upon me; for woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel." (1 Cor. IX, 16.)

St. James was one of the seminarians there that day and how he must have drunk in the teaching of his Divine Professor of Moral Theology. He was a kinsman of Our Lord, and afterwards, when he was Bishop of Jerusalem, he wrote the following passage on industrial and social ethics: "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl in your miseries, which shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted; and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be for a testimony against you, and shall eat your flesh like fire. You have stored up to yourself wrath against the last days. Behold the hire of laborers, who have reaped your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth; and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have feasted upon Earth; and in riotousness you have nourished your hearts, in the day of slaughter." (The Catholic Epistle of St. James the Apostle, V, 1-5.)

And yet you hear once in a while some solemn simpleton enunciate with all the finality of a decree of the Council of Trent, "Seminarians should not be taught too much social and industrial ethics, because nothing should be preached from the pulpit but the Gospel." We are afraid that there is too much of the Gospel that is never preached, and that part especially which needs to be preached most at the present day.

Contrasts and Reactions

It is no wonder that the old priests and the officer of the temple and the Sadducees of the old Dispensation were grieved that these young, fiery apostles were coming into their preserves, and preaching doctrines like that of Our Lord, and St. Peter, and St. James, and St. Matthew, who wrote in his Gospel a saying of Jesus to His disciples, "Amen I say to you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of Heaven. And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew XIX, 23, 24).

"And it came to pass on the morrow that their princes, and ancients, and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem, and Annas the high-priest, and Caiphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were the kindred of the high-priest . . . and calling them, they charged them not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John, answering, said to them, if it be just in the sight of God, to hear you rather than God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard" (Acts IV, 5-6, 18-20).

The Choice

Yes, we must choose between God and Mammon, for no man can serve two masters. During the first three centuries of her divine life, the Church was hidden as her founder, preparing and being prepared by a divine education for the great work of her public life. The Church was born into a pagan civilization. The Roman world about it knew nothing of God or His laws. Like pagan economists of our own day, the Roman Empire held that ethics had nothing to do with the problems of Capital and Labor. This attitude of mind is always typical of pagan beliefs and practices. Today, we witness once in a while the sad spectacle of men professing even the Catholic Faith who declare openly that even the Bishops have no right to declare certain practices immoral, which the Old and the New Testaments denounce as sins of such a heinous nature that they cry to the very heavens for vengeance.

But the Church, true to her divine constitution given to the eleven in Galilee, has by divine obligation laid upon her the functions both of a priest, and of a prophet. By that prophetic office we mean a continuation of that moral exhortation which the prophets of the Old Dispensation so flamingly began and so sternly preached by the infant Church born of the spirit's fiery shower. Popes and Bishops of recent times have given us a splendid example of the exercise of this prophetic spirit. Let us also preach the moral law with that same high and free detachment of spirit, at once austere, idealistic and Catholic. We shall see in our next article how the early Church applied the teaching of Christ and the apostles to the social problems of the Roman Empire.

Article IX

The Church and Labor in the Empires of Antiquity

The Catholic Church from the very day that its Divine Founder was accounted the son of a common laboring man, Himself a toiler at the carpenter's bench, has always been accounted the Church of the poor, the lowly and the humble. The reason of this is that the Church has always sanctified labor as a necessary and as a blessed thing. She has always fought side by side with the downtrodden the battles of oppressed labor, because she has always stood up for the dignity and high destiny and intrinsic worth of human personality; and labor, no matter how common or how hard, is that human personality transformed into wealth.

On the contrary, the pagan world of old and now, considers labor as a badge of disgrace. In the Latin of the Roman Empire, laborers were called *proletarii*, child-bearers, just like today again the burden of propagating the race seems to be devolving more and more on the hardworking poor, because every decadent

civilization produces a crop of those short-haired social uplifters, who practice and preach that wicked doctrine of national suicide, birth-control. *Proletarii* were the sixth and lowest class of Roman citizens. The poor, their children, and their labor were for the benefit of the rich, in order that these old, bloated Roman capitalists might live in ease and luxury and opulence. Even the mighty Socrates, greatest of pagan moralists, Plato and Aristotle, princes of pagan philosophers that they were, could not rise above this servile standard of their day and age.

The Roman Patrician despised the man who had not amassed a fortune. Rome, like ourselves, worshipped success; and is it not a sad fact that after two thousand years of Christianity, that today in America it is considered in certain circles a crime to be poor? The rich bankers were the idols of Roman society. They were tremendously powerful and influential in directing the current of Roman political life. Rome suffered from all the evils of invisible government that democracy today suffers from, through the influences of Wall Streets innumerable, in the struggles of our own political arena. Rome, when she was poor, was a community of hardy, thrifty and self-denying religious people; when she expanded into a world power, capitalistic and militaristic, Romans became avaricious, spend-thrift and licentious.

The Decay of Rural Life

Simple rural life decayed, as it is decaying today in every industrial country, swept away in a flood of emigration to the fast life and license of the cities. Small estates and holdings were grabbed up by the rich senatorial families. Cheap slave labor competed with the small farm owner, and drove him also from the soil in despair. Something similar is happening to American rural life today. In the last decade, the number of city dwellers has increased 16.4 per cent, while the rural population has grown but 4.1 per cent. The small towns have more than absorbed what is here classified as rural growth, while the open country – God's great outdoors – has experienced an actual decrease.

The social action department of the National Catholic Welfare Council is devoting scientific thought to this problem, under the direction of Rev. Edwin V. O'Hara, director of the rural life bureau, a name well known in Catholic Social Action circles, and a graduate of the St. Paul Seminary also, like his illustrious chief, Dr. John A. Ryan.

Oliver Goldsmith drew a picture of a land suffering from this canker in the eighteenth century, when the industrial revolution was beginning to deface the beautiful, simple, peaceful rural life of Merrie Mediaeval England.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
 Where wealth accumulates and men decay;
 Princes and lords may flourish or may fade;
 A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
 But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
 When once destroyed, can never be supplied,
 A time there was, 'ere England's griefs began,
 When every rood of ground maintained its man;
 For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
 Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
 His best companions innocence and health,
 And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.
 But times are alter'd, trade's unfeeling train
 Usurp the land, and dispossess the swain;
 Along the lawn, where scattered hamlets rose,
 Unwieldly wealth and cumbrous pomp repose,
 And every want to opulence allied,
 And every pang that folly pays to pride,
 Those gentle hours that plenty bade to bloom,
 Those calm desires that ask'd but little room,
 Those healthful sports that graced the peaceful scene,
 Lived in each look, and brighten'd all the green –
 These, far departing, seek a kinder shore,
 And rural mirth and manners are no more.

– *The Deserted Village.*

Another poet has drawn for us a picture of the sad lot of these once so happy people, now herded together in the sordid, ugly, filthy squalor of our large industrial cities.

There among the glooming alleys
 Progress halts on palsied feet,
 Crime and hunger cast our maidens
 By the thousands on the street.

There the master scrimps his haggard sempstress
 Of her daily bread,
 There a single sordid attic
 Holds the living and the dead.

– (Tennyson; *Locksley Hall, Sixty years after.*)

Ancient Sources of Economic Ruin

The Roman *latifundia*, or big landed estates worked by slave labor, took the place of the small independent proprietors. It corresponded in some measure to the big predatory capitalistic holdings of our natural national resources in our own times. This system of *latifundia* gradually caused the utter ruin of the Italian peasantry, and involved in it the general destruction of the community. Pliny is made responsible for the saying, “*Latifundia perdidere Italiam*” – the great estates ruined Italy.

In this old pagan civilization, there were other laborers besides slaves. But they were in no true sense free. There was even a simulacrum of trade unionism as a legalized institution which took its origin almost simultaneously in Egypt, Greece and Italy. The Old Testament mentions communities of craftsmen. “Joab the father of the valley of artificers; for artificers were there . . . and the families of the houses of them that wrought fine linen in the House of oath . . . these are the potters, and they dwelt in Plantations and Hedges, with the king for his works, and they abode there” (1 Paralipomenon IV, 14, 21, 23).

The Jews of the Old Dispensation, because of the religious influences due to a supernatural Revelation, of which they were the custodians, held labor in more respect than any other people of antiquity. The stupendous Pagan monuments, visited every year by thousands of tourists, were the work of myriads of poor laborers who suffered the most trying hardships, the fruit of blood and stripes, of grinding oppression and untold human misery. Like our social set today, the Egyptians of the higher classes snobbishly despised the manual laborer. They possessed even a capitalistic press in these old, far-off times. In Maspero’s *History of Egypt*, we find a bard describing the poverty and utter misery of the toilers of that day, giving us a picture as dreary as that of the life of the average New England or Lancashire factory town of today.

The weaver within doors is worse off than a
 Woman; squatting, his knees against his chest,
 He does not breathe . . .
 The dyer, his fingers reeking –
 And their smell is that of fish-spawn –
 Toils, his two eyes oppressed with fatigue,
 His hand does not stop,
 And as he speeds his time in cutting out cloth,
 He has a hatred of garments.
 The shoemaker is very unfortunate;
 He moans ceaselessly,

His health is the health of the spawning fish,
And he gnaws the leather.

Victims of State Tyranny

The sad lot of these trade unionists was due to the fact that they were organized in the interest of state tyranny. The thoroughness of these organizations was unsurpassed even in the palmiest days of Imperial Prussia. There was no personal ownership. These empires were huge servile states, the ultimate goal of all capitalistic regimes or communistic bureaucracies. We in America especially have great lessons to learn from the economic history of the pagan, as contrasted with the Catholic, past. There is being propagated in our country today the most dangerous political heresy that ever destroyed the liberties of a free people. It is the idolatry of the state. He is the truest and most loyal American that resists, with every weapon that God and nature has put into his hands, the intrusion of the State into the regulation of his private life. In modern as in ancient life, it is bound to end in state tyranny. We should add to our daily litany one more ejaculation, "Lord, save us from these misguided, howling pseudo-patriots, lay and clerical." They are the greatest plague of our public and private life in America today. Once these sacred private rights and liberties are lost to the state, it will be impossible to regain them.

The common good demands a reasonable state control, and a reasonable state ownership, but we should be extremely cautious about putting our hand in that lion's mouth. War propaganda and war hysteria were responsible for leading many astray in this respect. What a sad spectacle it was for all of us to see so many of the cloth even, who were so forgetful of their proud lineage as to stump around the hustings as ranting prohibitionists a few years ago because they would not heed the wise counsel of Leo XIII to the Catholics of America, "to steer clear of all such fanatical movements." Let them take a good look at themselves now!

A good dose of Catholicity is the only cure for all these manifestations of this puritanic and intolerant spirit. A pet delusion of especially weak lay and clerical mentality seems to be that somehow American institutions, and particularly the American government and constitution, are being threatened by some secret terrible, radical, foreign, political, economic and religious opinions, propagated by unspeakable, illiterate, unshaven, unskilled laborers working in coal mines, somewhere around Pittsburgh, Pa., lately arrived from Soviet Russia! They have forgotten that they were once divinely commissioned to preach the Gospel, but now they think themselves the only Simon pure, one hundred per cent American superpatriots, divinely inspired to save our institutions and our country, by allying themselves to every stupid and insipid fad that tries to rivet the chains of the servile

state on the free limbs of the real American citizen. Perhaps it was some such hysterical wave as this that made Dr. Johnson define Patriotism as the last refuge of a scoundrel.

The One Way

“Away from the servile state! must be his cry. Whether the means of production, on which his livelihood and liberty depend, are in the hands of a capitalistic regime or a communistic bureaucracy will matter little in the end. There is but one way towards freedom, popular prosperity and democratic industry, and that, as was pointed out at the very conclusion of the World War by the Catholic Episcopacy in America, lies in bringing about a social reconstruction in which the majority shall attain to a personal ownership and control, wholly or in part, of the means of production. This must be our ultimate aim . . . Here, therefore, is the mountain of vision the American Bishops pointed out, where alone industrial peace and social justice can be attained, and where popular prosperity shall flourish for all, provided that the Code of Sinai is not forgotten nor the charity of Christ.” (*Democratic Industry*, pp. 7-8, Joseph Husslein, S. J.)

The Church and Capitalism

The point we wish driven home is this, that nobody has a right to be apologizing in the name of the Catholic Church for the present capitalistic system of distribution of the country's wealth, because the Church has no apology to make for it at all. She even teaches that it is a thing opposed to her social aims in the world. Her past economic history has written this so large on the face of civilization that no lay or clerical ignorance of it in the future can be considered, except culpably vincible, if the slightest effort is made to become acquainted with her ethical teaching.

“Certain captains of industry seem to think that because the Catholic Church opposes Socialism, she has pronounced a benediction unqualified upon modern Capitalism. They would like to have her function as the moral policeman of plutocracy. They forget that the late Pope Leo XIII went so far as to declare that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than slavery itself. To represent the Church as the unquestioning upholder of Capitalism is to offer an insult to her genius, teaching and traditions.” (Dr. John A. Ryan: *Socialism, Promise or Menace*.) This quotation from such an eminent authority ought to silence forever anyone who may have harbored the suspicion that the Catholic Church was ever dominated by any such capitalistic feeler instincts.

Article X

Greek and Roman Trade Unions

We may pass over Plutarch's description of the origin of Roman labor guilds as fanciful rather than strictly historical. It is still a historical fact that trade unions existed in Rome a century before Christ and perhaps their origin does date back to the time of Numa Pompilius, 715-673 B. C. Plutarch enumerates eight of these craft guilds. Whatever prominence they possessed was due to their usefulness to the state which from its foundation showed marked militaristic leanings. As artisans they were held in the greatest contempt and found their place in the lowest stratum of society, utterly despised by the classic pagan world. Cicero, in his *De Officiis*, I, 42, 150, refers to them thus: "The laborers are all engaged in a base occupation, nor can there be anything honorable to a freeman in a workshop."

Solon in Greece started his great reforms about the time of this half-mythical king, Numa Pompilius of Rome. He was born in the year 638 B. C. The poor in Greece were so ground down that they sold themselves into slavery, and even their sons and daughters, so as to obtain bread from those cruel pagan masters of wealth. To avert a bloody revolution by oppressed labor, rich and poor alike chose Solon as dictator. Labor was freed from the working of a law that reduced it to slavery if unable to pay its debts. It got an active, though not passive, vote and was ranked fourth in the classes of citizens.

The Roman law which granted to labor the right of organizing, provided these societies were not hostile to the state, is regarded by Gaius as a copy of Solonic legislation. H. Tomkins, in his *Friendly Societies of Antiquity*, gives us an idyllic picture of these Greek guilds: "Let us now consider what these companies were which are called by the name of *eranoi* and *thiasoi*, and of which the inscriptions have revealed the number and importance. They were formed of members who met together to sacrifice to certain divinities and to celebrate their festivals in common; besides this, they assisted those members who fell into necessitous circumstances, and provided for their funerals. They were at once religious associations and friendly societies. Sometimes they daringly partook of a political and commercial character.

"These private corporations, recognized by the state, had their presiding and other officers, their priests, their funds supplied by the contributions of members and the liberality of benefactors. They assembled in their sanctuaries and made decrees. They were found in great numbers in the important cities, and especially in the maritime ones. At Rhodes, for example, they were the Companions of the Sun, the Sons of Bacchus, of Minerva Lindienne, of Jupiter Atagyrius, of Jupiter Soter."

Guilds in Rome

Craft and merchant guilds reached a very complete and systematic development, in Rome. We have a vast collection of inscriptions dealing with these trade and labor organizations. Tarruntenus Paternus, Prefect of the Imperial Guard in 179, gives a list of crafts especially privileged by the Imperial authorities of the time, because these crafts were closely connected with military works of various kinds. Constantine gave special privileges in 337 to thirty-five trade corporations. Though we have then in Egypt, Greece and Rome, a grouping similar to that of the Middle Ages, we see that organization and union of itself was not sufficient in pagan times to improve the condition of artisans, noticeably in comparison with the status of slave labor at the same period. There was one essential factor wanting to produce a state of society like that which Leo XIII declares to have existed in that most glorious epoch in the history of the world, the Middle Ages. That factor was Christianity. A Christian civilization at any time minus Christianity can be achieved and will be possible when the great drama of *Hamlet* can be acted without the Royal Dane.

Examples in History

“On this subject we need but recall for one moment the examples recorded in history. Of these facts there cannot be any shadow of doubt: for instance, that civil society was renovated in every part by the teachings of Christianity; that in the strength of that renewal the human race was lifted up to better things – nay, that it was brought back from death to life, and to so excellent a life that nothing more perfect had been known before, or will come to be known in the ages that have yet to be. Of this beneficent transformation, Jesus Christ was at once the first cause and the final end; as from Him all came, so to Him was all to be brought back . . . And if society is to be healed now, in no other way can it be healed save by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions” (Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*).

Pius XI, in his first great Encyclical Letter, *Urbi et Orbi*, points out the same Middle Ages as worthy of the highest praise because they of all the ages before or since were most completely dominated by the spirit of Christ. “When, therefore, states and peoples shall hold it as their sacred solemn duty, in home and foreign affairs, to obey the teachings and precepts of Jesus Christ, then at length they will enjoy the good peace among themselves, there will be mutual trust, and they will be able to settle peacefully any controversies that may arise. Any attempt of this nature that has been made hitherto has met with no, or at least very little, success, especially in matters on which disagreement among the peoples has been more bitter. For there is no institution among men which can impose on all peoples any

code of common laws, adapted to the present times, such as was possessed in the Middle Ages by that true society of nations which was the community of Christian peoples, among whom, even if in act law was indeed frequently violated, nevertheless the sanctity of the law remained in force, secure rule by which the nations should judge one another.” (Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pope Pius XI, *Ubi Arcano Dei*.)

The One Way to Peace

Pope Pius elsewhere in his first Encyclical insists that there is no other way to peace or happiness or prosperity even in this mortal life for society except through a restoration of the reign of Christ. There is no consolation either in this papal document for the pious and smug conservative who thinks everything is just going fine with the world, and that our modern progress has produced the greatest civilization ever known. As a matter of fact, the Pope bluntly states that “human society is actually going back to barbarism.” The increase in the number of the very poor is the cause indicated for the increase of the enemies of public order.

“Instead, then, of a feeling of confident security, we have growing uncertainty and fear of trouble; instead of regular and fruitful work, refusal to work, idleness; instead of the tranquility of order coming from peace, disturbance and confusion reign. Hence, as we see, industry is ruined, commerce is suffocated, literature and the arts suffer; and a worse thing than all that has come to pass, the habit of life which can be called really Christian has in great measure disappeared, so that human society does not seem to be progressing on the road to good, as is men’s boast, but actually going back towards barbarism.”

Catholic Action

Like his illustrious predecessors, Pius XI emphasizes the great and vast importance of “Catholic Action” for the clergy and the laity. “This is the ‘good fight,’ the battle undertaken and engaged on many sides, to gain for the family and the Church the rights due to them by nature and given them by Almighty God in the schools for the education of the children. In this is included everything, institutions, councils, works, comprised under the name of ‘Catholic Action.’ Not, only are all things of this nature, which it would take long to enumerate, firmly to be guarded, but they must be increased and developed as the circumstances of men and things require. The effort may seem hard and laborious, both for pastors and faithful, but in very truth these things are part of the Pastoral office and of Christian life. And from this it is evident – too evident to need illustration – how closely they are connected with the restoration of the kingdom of Christ and

Christian reconciliation in the peace which is truly of that kingdom; the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ.” And then immediately after this exhortation to “Catholic Action,” and after saying how hard and laborious the effort entailed would be for pastors and faithful, the Holy Father, after stating that “Catholic Action” was a real part of the Pastoral office and Christian life, puts in this sentence, we think, a most pointed one: “We ask you, Venerable Brethren, to tell this to your priests.”

His Venerable Brothers of the American Hierarchy have most loyally anticipated the Sovereign Pontiff’s wishes in this respect in their “program of social reconstruction” and other pastoral letters of late date. Are we to doubt even in the least that His Holiness will find the average American priest less loyal to these solemn instructions emanating “by the hidden counsel and disposition of Almighty God, without any merit of Our own from this Seat of truth and charity?” What priest worthy of the name, then, who is at all conscious of this challenge of his own Hierarchy, in direct response to the expressed will of the Father of Christendom, can be longer indifferent to this call to duty involved in all the departments of “Catholic Action”? Which of them can be so conceited as to ignore the Pontiff’s diagnosis of our boasted modern progress, and try to put up his own little spluttering candle against that powerful searchlight that unerringly sweeps the horizons of the Earth from the Apostolic heights of the Vatican, where Pius, the Vicar of Christ and Successor of St. Peter, keeps heavenly inspired guard from that watch tower of the world? Yes, he does say explicitly that human society does not seem to be progressing on the road to good, as is men’s boast, but actually going back towards barbarism.

Our safety, after all, is to be found in being romantically behind the times, in being like all the best thinkers of today, in being docile to the teachings of Leo XIII and his illustrious successors one and all, down to Pius XI, as our authentic literal quotations from their great encyclical letters demonstrate, in trying to restore the spirit of these great ages than which Leo tells us “nothing more perfect had been known before, or will come to be known in the ages that have yet to be.” Bold hyperbole indeed, but it cannot be exaggerated, because it is the sober conclusion of a Pope that can least of all be accused of obscurantism, Leo, the Pontiff of his age, thou glorious tiaraed prophet of Mediaevalism.

The Pastoral Office

Like Leo, too, Pius tells the Bishops to “recall to the minds of the faithful that when they take part in your work and that of your clergy in carrying abroad the knowledge of Christ and teaching the lesson of love publicly and privately, that then they are indeed worthy of being hailed as ‘a chosen generation, a kingly

priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people' (I Peter, II, 9); then, indeed, they will be most closely united with Us and with Christ in propagating and installing the kingdom of Christ by their efforts and zeal, then they will have well deserved the common peace among men."

At last, turning disgustedly away from the decadent present trend toward barbarism, thinking we are sure of the eternal years, and the glories of the days that have been, Pius XI recalls the holy memory of the saintly Pius X whose motto, too, was "to restore all things in Christ," preparing, as if under Divine inspiration, the work of the "Peace of Reconciliation" which was to be the purpose of Benedict XV. "We carry on what both Our predecessors put before themselves, uniting them in one, and we shall strive with all Our strength to attain 'The Peace of Christ in the Reign of Christ'." "Catholic Action," it is the watchword of the hour. It is the message of Pius XI to the Bishops of the City and the World, to the clergy and to the laity. "If thou also hadst known, and that in this thy day, the things that are to thy peace." (Luke XIX, 42.) These words of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem are the burden of this great encyclical applied to the whole world by Pope Pius XI.

Article XI

Roman Politics and Trade Unions

It is very amusing to read those chapters of Roman history that deal with the ward politics of the decadent last days of the Republic, and to compare the speeches and promises of Roman politicians with those of our own office-seekers. As often happens even now, the economic purpose of Roman trade and labor unions was lost sight of and their political influence was sold out to the loudest demagogues, and the most corrupt and venal politicians. If Caesar and Augustus destroyed or dissolved the Roman guilds, therefore, we must not hurriedly condemn them for autocratic suppression of the rights of free association within the state. They were not trying, either, to make the Roman Empire safe for Democracy, of course, but they were rather trying to make Democracy safe.

One might say that in practice Democracy always needs some sort of restraining hand to save it from degenerating into physical mob-violence. Majority rule is a blessed thing only when majorities have great respect for a higher authority and a holier obligation, viz., the moral law. Majority rule in itself has no intrinsic sanctity as too many nowadays are inclined to think.

Sallust gives us some graphic pictures of the last days of the Republic, of its hideous private and public immorality. Those who hated the *profanum vulgus* – the profane rabble – like Cicero even courted them with bribes and promises. The suppression of guild meetings may have been due in the majority of cases to a

desire to save them from being used as tools of political agitators and ambitious politicians.

Political Venality

“It is curious to notice, that by the time these old guilds emerge into light again as clubs that could be used for political purposes, a new source of gain, and one that was really sordid, had been placed within the reach of the Roman *plebs urbana*, it was possible to make money by your vote in the election of the magistrate. In that degenerate age, when the vast accumulation of wealth made it possible for a man to purchase his way to power, in spite of repeated attempts to check the evil by legislation, the old principle of honorable association was used to help the small man to make a living by choosing the unprincipled and often the incompetent to undertake the government of the Empire” (*Social Life at Home in the Age of Cicero*, pp. 46, 47, W. Warde Fowler).

We cannot state positively whether there was any legal limit to election expenses, but no expense seems to have been spared in the way of electioneering posters. The signs displayed near popular taverns and along the public places of the large cities are well worth the study of a modern American campaign manager. The ruins of Pompeii gave up signs like the following:

“The Fishermen Vote for Pompilius Rufus as Edile.”

“The United Goldsmiths Want Cuspius Pansa for Edile.”

Here is a specimen which shows that a politician, if not a prophet, is sometimes honored in his own country:

“His neighbors favor Casellius Marcellus.”

An appeal even to religious prejudice was not wanting sometimes, as this one shows:

“Venus Wants Casellius for Edile!”

The Bankers’ Union of Pompeii was strong for C. Julius Polybius because his electioneering promise read: “He brings good bread.”

Feminists of the advanced schools of today would do well to take a look at the activities of like political reformers during the century ending about the birth of Christ. Prominent society leaders, as the placards show, were campaigning vigorously for their political favorites. And still we think that the hands of the clock are being moved forward with lightning-like speed because this is the twentieth century!

Power of the Guilds Dreaded

Roman statesmen of the century before Christ dreaded the secret power of the guilds. They dreaded especially their secret gatherings. The same is true of later times as is shown by the famous correspondence between Pliny and the Emperor Trajan. Trajan was not opposed to guilds as such, but he liked to be sure that they had no political tendencies towards anarchy or I. W. W. tactics. If the guilds were tolerated at all, it was not due to any respect shown for the rights of labor. The pagan mind could not conceive respect for the working man as a fellow being stamped with the image of God, whom it knew not. The life and condition of the poor outside election times had no concern for Roman congressmen.

“The statesman, if he troubled himself about them at all, looked on them as a dangerous element of society, to be considered as human beings only at election times; at all other times merely as animals that had to be fed in order to keep them from becoming an active peril. The philosopher, even the Stoic, whose creed was by far the most ennobling in that age, seems to have left the dregs of the people quite out of account. Though his philosophy nominally took the whole of mankind into its cognizance, it believed the masses to be degraded and vicious and made no effort to redeem them” (Fowler, *Social Life at Rome*).

State Repression of Unions

The Roman plutocrats feared the unions because there were no motives to deter the common laborers from deeds of violence. They were oppressed to the point of starvation and despair. As time went on under successive Emperors, stringent regulations were decreed, until State interference made life in the guilds intolerable. It is an iron law of statecraft that the paternalistic attitude of the State never lessens, but constantly and infallibly tends to increase. The poor and the helpless working classes are its first victims, but it gradually reaches out to enslave every class and condition of citizen. It does it often under specious high-sounding shibboleths. It is particularly successful if it can enlist the Churches to its aid in the name of Christian endeavor. It is the political heresy of America today because we are living in an age sodden with philanthropy, which would be natural charity were it not completely divorced from Christian chivalry which is the respect of God for the rights of one's fellowman.

Finally, under these servile tendencies, the Church becomes a mere department of State. Government bureaucracy, the creation of successful politicians and clever demagogues, tends to complete control over the property and persons of its citizens, and lastly their consciences. The Church is completely shackled in such a

decadent civilization. No weapons are left to her to fight the battles of humanity and brotherhood. There is no room for a free Church in a servile State.

Effect of Law of Limitations

There was an ancient law forbidding any Roman citizen to possess more than 500 *jugera* (acres) of the Roman public land. Yet a few speculators were able to accumulate farm capital in their hands until the *latifundia* became the curse of Rome, and Tiberius and Sempronius Gracchus lost their lives fighting for land-reform legislative measures. The descendants of the once proud peasant proprietors became the proletariat of Rome, who had to be ever held back from revolution by doles of bread and gladiatorial shows.

At this same time, the Emperors and wealthy citizens dazzled the public eye with the most extravagant excesses of civic magnificence. Beneath this vulgar superficial display was rottenness and misery untold. No ordinary slave had a shadow of human rights. Thousands of human beings were the goods and chattels of a man of wealth and station. And mind, in the early days of the Empire, in the beginnings of the Christian era, the slave population of Rome is estimated at about 1,000,000, while the upper classes were only about 10,000, who formed the Roman plutocracy, who believed that they had a divine right to enslave the entire world in the name of the *Imperium Romanum*.

Capitalistic Slaves

These poor slaves, human beings like ourselves, were the living machinery of Greek and Roman capitalism which practiced the most cruel industrial despotism known to history. Cato, who was a fine type of the "Old Roman," was particularly cruel. His hard spirit scorned Greek culture and Greek humanism. "His conduct towards the slaves of his household was most detestable. The law held them to be mere chattels, and he treated them as such, without any regard to the rights of humanity. After supper, he often severely chastized them, thong in hand, for trifling acts of negligence, and sometimes condemned them to death. When they were worn out, or useless, he sold them, or turned them out of doors. He treated the lower animals no better" (*History of Rome*, Sir William Smith).

There was no middle class, for free laborers sunk into the most abject poverty, untold misery and degradation. They became the "clients" who hung around the doors of the rich in order to give an air of pomp to the mansions of the great, who treated them little better than dogs. They ceased finally to perform even menial labor, swelling still more the idle mass of the proletariat, supported by the State with doles of free grain, of bread, and of oil. They must be kept from revolt at any

price, for if they ever became class conscious of their wrongs and of their strength, they would tear to pieces the mere handful of idle rich who physically and morally rotted amid their fabulous wealth and luxuries.

Thus did the few rich debauch and demoralize the numerous poor. Roman law maintained all the injustices of the modern *laissez-faire* policy, supporting in every conceivable manner this absolute power of wealth. In Athens, a law was actually proposed to reduce all artisans to slavery. These are the conditions which labor may expect under a pagan civilization, whether it be a prelude to or an aftermath of Christianity.

Roman Plutocracy

At the same time, these old Roman plutocrats secured all the lucrative offices of the state, until the great Roman Senate itself became at last an hereditary body of legislators. Their big financial enterprises successfully invaded all the provinces, under the aegis of the victorious Roman eagles, Greece, Macedonia, Africa, Bithynia, Cilicia, Syria, Judea, Spain and Gaul, until the old Roman Forum became a gambling den for the stock exchange of the pagan world.

They looted the Imperial Treasury in their mad rush for wealth. The taxes of Imperial Rome were farmed out to the highest bidder. The Roman governor went to his allotted province to make three fortunes, one to buy the votes of the Roman people who elected him, the second for himself and his family when he retired from office, and the third to bribe the courts and judges who were sure to prosecute him for extortion, when his period of office was over.

The arrogance and brutality of this new aristocracy of wealth knew no limits. They fomented wars in order to destroy their commercial rivals, and old patriots like Cato thundered in the forum until Carthage and Corinth were destroyed. The rich Roman landlords burned the vineyards and olive groves of Gaul in order to kill competition in the markets of the Empire.

The Great Roman Publicists

We all know that Cicero was a great orator, but how few think of him as a wealthy corporation lawyer – yes, Cicero, the well-paid advocate of the publicans and bankers, whom he delighted to call, in the most idyllic style, *ornamentum civitatis*, *firmamentum rei publicae*, *flos equitum* – the very ornaments of society, the pillars of the State, the noblest knightly flower of its citizenship! What adulation and flattery of the rich! Cicero the corrupt, while he was writing beautiful philosophical treatises on virtue, was despoiling with violence the inhabitants of the province he administered. He became a multimillionaire in less

than two months, to the tune of two million two hundred thousand *sestercia*. Honest Brutus, the murderer of the noble Caesar, invested his capital in Cyprus at 48 per cent, and Cicero thundered against Verres for loaning money in Sicily at 24 per cent. Seneca, whom we used to think a saint, when we read his philosophical meditations, was the same robber Seneca who despoiled helpless Britains by his usury, the while preaching sermons on the contempt of riches.

After all, the hands of the clock seem to go round in a circle. Change a few names and addresses and you might be writing the history of Anglo-Saxon civilization as we see it round about us in this year of grace 1925. There was the great mass of the poor and the slaves, and the wealthy few at the top, the greatest menace to the stability of any civilization. That same predatory wealth has since brought many an empire tumbling down as it brought the Roman Empire to its final ruin and fall. Is it not a sad thing to ponder on that the shortsightedness of a few old grasping plutocrats can be the cause of wrecking a whole civilization to which the world even today owes so much in other ways?

Now thy Forum roars no longer fallen every purple Caesar's dome –
Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm sound forever of Imperial Rome.

Article XII

The Church and Slave Labor in the Roman Empire

When it was not possible for the slave or the artisan to be more degraded physically, mentally, and morally in the Roman Empire, the young Catholic Church appears upon the scene. Slave labor had no comfort or hope left save that of drowning their miseries in acid wine. Today in our free country, the Palladium of our democratic liberties makes this much even a crime against constitutional freedom, because the Servile State begrudges toiling labor the legitimate exaltation that would be gotten from quaffing the most meticulous cruet of the vilest wine.

The new teaching of the Christian Church transformed the life of the Roman slave. It began by ameliorating his hard lot. Immediate freedom would be impossible, and would lead to bloody and futile revolution, just as a sudden change today would lead to anarchy and bolshevism. The good conservative force of the Catholic Church helps society to change slowly, by leavening the bad, corrupt mass with sound doctrinal and economic teaching, until finally the whole lump is leavened. So like Leo XIII in the nineteenth century in his Encyclical on Labor, so the two St. Gregories, of Nazianzen, and Nyssa, in the fourth century, with SS. John Chrysostom and Lactantius, rose up in that age of protest against the unnatural inequality that existed between the few idle and licentious rich, and the many hard working poor.

Slave and Master Equal

After a while the state began to legislate into her civil codes what the Church preached from her pulpits. The poor slave and his rich master were equal in the eyes of God. Slaves rose to the highest ranks of the Episcopacy, and in Pope Callixtus in the third century, the Roman world beheld a slave in the chair of St. Peter, wielding all the power, as did the peasant Pope Pius X, of the highest office the Church could bestow. Labor was thus gradually restored to its true dignity in the minds of men.

At the suggestion of the Church, Christian Emperors mitigated the harsh dominion, and finally took away the slave owner's power of life and death. The slave could plead before the law. His marriage was respected as legal. He was set free in the sanctuary before the very altar of the Church. Council after council made laws to protect the manumitted slave. If ill treated, he could take refuge in the Church, never again to pass back to his master's power, but to the state and condition of a free man.

Saints of the Church

The Church was all this time producing hundreds of saints, whose lives were the greatest rebuke to the spirit of the age, to its riches, its lusts, and its oppression. Imperial Rome finally collapsed through the sheer weight of its own rottenness. Its culture and its glory were engulfed in its hopeless fall. Soon there was nothing left of the proud mistress of the world. Her pride and her power had passed forever. Gradually a waste of ruin and desolation covered the face of Europe. Owls hooted and wolves preyed from the once stately mansions and beautiful palaces of fallen Caesars, whom the young savage races of the North had dragged into slavery. The marble baths and luxurious theaters of pagan Rome had no charm for her barbarian conquerors, who were at home alike in the forest and the field. Pagan, Capitalistic, Imperial Rome had refused to listen to the Church. Then, as now, she was considered the great enemy of the state. The Church had to let that corrupt state go or perish in its ruins.

She immediately began to civilize the young savage tribes that had overrun the Empire. Her missionaries and her monks went into this new wilderness, building up a new Christian civilization. Only for the rejuvenating power of that young Church, Europe would be as savage today as America when Christopher Columbus discovered it.

When the Empire fell, the ancient learning of the classic period would have been lost and forgotten, were it not for the monks of the West. Even men like Professor Carver, of Harvard, are forced to admit that Europe and America owe whatever

culture and learning they possess to these Catholic monks of an earlier day. He states that their part in preserving the ancient learning, and civilizing the rude barbarians, entitles them to the respect of all mankind. (*The Foundations of National Prosperity*, Ely, Hess, Leith and Carver.)

The laborious monks of St. Columbanus and St. Benedict, who cleared the forest, drained the swamp, and preserved the art of agriculture, did constructive work of the highest kind, at a time when industry was all but submerged by the brutality and violence which then prevailed over the whole of Europe. Let us recall a few of their great names:

Great Benedictine Leaders

“Augustine in England; Boniface in Germany; Anschar and Aubert in Scandinavia; Suitbert and Wellibrod in Holland; Amandus, Remaclus and Ursmar in Belgium; Ruppert, Emmeran and Virgilius in Bavaria and Austria, Adalbert and Anastasius in Bohemia; Pilgrim and Wolfgang in Hungary; Gall and Pirmin in Switzerland; Leander and Isidor in Spain; Bruno in Prussia and Benno among the Slavs, and finally Lawrence Kalffon and Rudolph in Iceland are all names of great Benedictines who must be regarded as the first to lead the nations from the darkness of paganism to the light of the Christian faith and to the blessings of a civilized life. It is estimated that in France alone about three-eighths of the towns owe their existence to the work of the Benedictine monks.” (Dom Waternus Spitz, O. S. B., *Catholic Missions*, Dec. 1917.)

These Catholic monks were the men who humanized, dignified and sanctified labor. These were the founders of the twin democracy of labor and liberty. Wherever the monks appeared were built homes of industry and learning. Especially distinguished were the sons of St. Benedict. They brought the world forth again from the darkness of paganism to the light of Christian truth and the blessings of a new civilization. Nearly one-half the towns of France were founded by Benedictine monks! France, the eldest daughter of the Church! France, the birthplace of Scholastic Philosophy and Chivalry! France, the home of Gothic Art and Gothic Architecture! France, the sweetheart of the Nations, “whom hast thou reproached and whom hast thou blasphemed? Against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? against the Holy one of Israel.” France that is now proud to produce the blasphemous ex-Premier Viviani, who boasted that his life work would be to extinguish the Lights of Heaven, in the native land of Joan of Arc, and drive Jesus Christ over the frontiers forever. Viviani, whom we dined and wine in Washington in order to make the world safe for democracy! O, one hundred per cent un-Americans, how many crimes will you commit in the sacred name of Liberty!

These savage tribes that now met the Church were also strangers to the sweet spirit of Christ. Slaves with them were on the same level as cattle. These barbarian hordes had degraded and would still more degrade and brutalize labor. But the Popes and Bishops and priests and monks of the Church were here again, as in pagan Rome, the friends and defenders of the toiling slaves. Learning and Art, Agriculture and the crafts went forth from the monasteries. The monks, being workers on the land themselves, knew how to sympathize with their fellow toilers. The great monastic Abbeys became the centers of civilization, in a religious, literary and social way, as well as along economic and industrial lines. Each monastery became a model farm, and towns grew up around them, and received charters of liberty from the beginning.

These holy houses were the first sanctuaries of the new trinity – Labor, Learning and Liberty. Even such as it is, Anglo-Saxon democracy was started by a monk. There was a time not so long distant, and perhaps here and there it lingers yet, when we used to teach even our own poor Catholic children that we owed all the blessings of the political liberty, that is now gradually being stolen from us, to the pilgrims and puritans of New England; and do we not insist sometimes on these holy innocents standing up to sing that same un-historical piece of pro-Reformation anti-Catholic propaganda, to the music of “God Save the King” of old England?

Thank God, some day Catholic and historic truth will break through the Stygian darkness that has too often enveloped our early education, and which has left so many prejudices behind it in old age, to warp our judgments and pervert our minds.

Economic History of the Church

From the very beginning, therefore, the economic history of the Church shows the very definite stand she took to defend the rights of labor. Her social mission today is the very same as it was in these earlier centuries of her divine life. Her Popes and Bishops now are not afraid to proclaim that message to the world of Capital and Labor. And the Catholic Church today, as in all the ages past, is on the side of the underdog, as she has always been since that blessed Christmas night, when her Founder had the doors of fashionable Bethlehem closed against His Divine poverty, and chose His first resting place, the lowly manger of the poor. And if there be anyone today looking Baptist-like for a sign if she be the only true Church of that abandoned Christ, we would ask him to go out into the bleak wilderness of the industrial world, with its teeming masses of laboring poor, and ask them, what Church is preaching again the gospel of hope to them? There is the Holy Roman Catholic Church. She is the same Church that has saved the world over and over again from economic slavery in spite of all the might and entrenched

corruption of pagan, imperial Rome, and in face of all the disheartening obstacles that blocked her way during those dreary pioneer centuries of barbarian Europe. She it is who is saving the world again today from the fetters of the Servile State, that Moloch of Capitalism, to which she refuses the human sacrifice of her children, for she is always true to her grand, historic, traditional role, the great friend of the laboring poor.

Calling to the Work

We think of Leo, of Pius, of Benedict calling us to the great work of Catholic Social Action. We hear with pride the great American Hierarchy in joint pastoral, and program of reconstruction, taking up once more the challenge of labor. We glory in the name of our own Dr. John A. Ryan carving a whole new social philosophy from the eternal principles of Moral Theology and Natural Ethics, a social and industrial philosophy that is making for working class well-being, for working class development, and high destiny in the world. There, too, is the Jesuit Husslein telling us all about the craft guilds, the most important social institutions of all history, these Christian trade unions that have such significant social suggestion for the ills of our own day, telling us, too, that political Democracy is a delusion if we cannot realize the necessity for industrial Democracy.

Do not be deceived, then, by any cringing, pious flunkey of Capitalism, who would have you believe that the Catholic Church is afraid of the common people. Recall the prophetic words of Premier Nitti of Italy: "While the bourgeoisie is eaten away by skepticism and no longer has faith even in those liberal institutions from which it sprang, while the wealthy and cultured upper classes fall away from religion, the Church feels ever more imperiously the necessity of returning – whence it came – to the people."

And William Hard: "The Church which began as the Church of the lowly, finds itself, after sitting with the mighty in the Middle Age, the Church of the lowly again. Among them it made its youth. Among them it may move to remake it." And like to one having authority, Benedict XV, from the throne of St. Peter: "The Catholic clergy must not oppose the proletarian revindications, but, provided they remain within the limits of honesty and justice, must favor them." We hear the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of this great United States of America, preaching a splendid Christian economic program, the newest Hierarchy of the oldest and largest of the Churches fully alive to their new but still human social situation, placing a new refreshment of the ancient gift of prophecy before the poor. We hear these young Bishops declaring the old truths of St. Augustine, of St. Ambrose; of St. Clement, of St. Antonino, of St. Thomas Aquinas, of St. Francis of Assisi, of St. Vincent de Paul in the strange modern circumstances of New York and

Philadelphia, and Boston and Chicago and St. Louis, and St. Paul, and San Francisco. It is only the great living Church, through the mouths of her Hierarchy, that could proclaim to the American people this challenging program of Catholic Social Action – a noble vocation for all who love Christ and His holy Church, to dedicate to it their lives, their liberty, and their sacred honor.

Article XIII

The Church and the Empire Teaches a Lesson – Neo-Mediaevalism

There is a note of sadness awakened in us as we contemplate vanished glories. Suppose the Roman Empire had not fallen at all, but become entirely Christian, what would have been the texture of the subsequent civilization of Europe?

For of all sad words of tongue or pen
The saddest are these: "It might have been!"

The Roman Empire perished. But it did not perish altogether like older empires. As a matter of fact, it was only the bad plutocratic capitalistic things of the Roman Empire that perished. The Church was strong enough to preserve the good things before the final overthrow of the central organized government of the empire. It was God's plan that the Church should be born into the civilization of the Roman Empire rather than any other, say, the Assyrian, or Egyptian, or Persian. If these other empires have perished entirely, may it not be due to the fact that there was no Church to save anything from their ruins that may have been worth preserving?

Without arrogating to ourselves any gift of seer, it is not unlikely that if our modern civilization impenitently rejects the grace that is being offered to it of Christianizing its economic and political institutions, even by a deathbed repentance, but elects to die in its plutocratic anti-Christian apostasy from its Savior, the Neo-Mediaeval civilization that will replace it a few centuries hence will be unable to discover of its relics even the mummified cerements that dress for a short day the pale dead glamour of equally deservedly unremembered pagan tyrannies, and its greatest title to historic oblivion will be, that it more than duplicated their idolatrous exploits in the arts of religious and social dissolution.

Handwriting on the Wall

The handwriting on the wall of modern civilization is very much more legible than the signs which spelled the doom of the Roman Empire in the days of St. Augustine. A few centuries before, who would be so foolish as to think that in so short a time the eternal *Imperium Romanum* would have ceased to be? Had not the

Immortal Gods written her destiny: *Tu regere imperio populos. Romane memento?* Livy's speech put into the mouth of Scipio exults in fated imperial immortality: "Do not imagine that if Scipio dies, the Roman Republic falls with him, that the Roman Empire descends with him into the grave. Forbid it, Almighty Jove! No, the destinies of the city, over whose birth the heavens themselves seemed to smile, so lovingly guarded by the gods, and whose sway is to last for all time, are not bound up with the fate of Scipio's frail and mortal body. Roman commanders, one after another, Flaminius Postumius, the Scipios, may be carried off by disease or the sword, but the Roman people is immortal."

We know there has been a school of history which taught that the Church was more than the occasion of Rome's decline and fall. A saner historical criticism, however, writes the story differently. Does the medicine which a sick man refuses to swallow cause his death? It is the same today. The things that are to the world's peace are rejected as no cures at all. They are labelled poison by the quack social practitioner. Those who are honestly prescribing for the ills of society after a scientific diagnosis of its social and economic diseases are called all sorts of bad names. Like the only Church in the Empire, they are considered enemies of social order in the Republic.

The meanest and most servile innuendos are sometimes thrown out to obstruct and stifle academic freedom of discussion, if the established order with all its immoral works and pomps be not blindly accepted with an implicit act of simple childlike faith. The slave mind may be content to batten on its mess of pottage, but the freeman will always proudly scorn clientary doles, strong and courageous in the might of every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God. "Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith?" Why do you attempt to prostitute the liberty of the freedom of the children of God? Why do you think that the suppression of truth can be pleasing to God or be a means of advancing the interests of His Holy Church? What has all our compromising brought to us? What good did it ever accomplish in all the long history of the Church? There is still a remnant left that shall try to prevent the proud Chariot of Israel from being made a trailer to the limousined Pierce-Arrows of Plutocracy, aye, even though, as in the bad days of "Investiture", it be offered a hitch to the triumphal car of Caesar.

Is Catholicism only a religion for catacombs? Is it afraid to go out boldly and publish its message to this haughty modern world that barely tolerates it, with its vulgar patronizing air? Did Christ tell His apostles that they must be conformed to the image of this world, or that this world rather must conform itself to the standards of the Gospel?

One jot or tittle of Catholicism shall not be eliminated even though we gained the whole world at the expense of a single Catholic principle. "Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things? The kings of the Earth stood

up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against his Christ. Let us break their bonds asunder, and let us cast away their yoke from us. He that dwelleth in Heaven shall laugh at them; and the Lord shall deride them. Then shall he speak to them in his anger and trouble them in his rage” (Psalm ii, 1-5).

Yes, Catholicism will be tolerated by the great and the powerful as long as it does not interfere with economics, or politics, or big business. But that kind of Catholicism is not worthy of the name. “And it is easier for Heaven and Earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fall.” (Luke xvi, 17.)

The Church Is for the Full Life of Man

Catholicism in all its fulness claims the whole life of man for God, his body as well as his soul. Christ is not content to reign only in the home and school, but also does He insist on ruling in the factory, the mill, the mine, the railroad, the workshop and the counting house. Therefore must we raise an unceasing protest against an unmoral and unchristian organization of commerce and industry, which ignores God and His justice, and tries to destroy His image in man. His kingdom must come, and His will must be done on Earth as it is in Heaven.

How much of Reformation religion have we absorbed into our practical everyday life and viewpoint would be an interesting problem to investigate. If unrestrained individualism be the cornerstone of Reformation theology, the modern world has largely succeeded in converting to its theory much that is considered pious Catholic practice and opinion. We start out to convert the world and the world almost succeeds in converting us. For example, is there any practical difference between these statements, and they are the expression of many staunch pillars of the household: “My religion is between myself and God alone.” “I don’t want any one between my soul and God.” “Religion has nothing to do with economics and politics.” “Me and God.”

Compromising With the World

But the saddest fact of all is this, that our compromising with the spirit of the world is getting us nowhere. The world has gone away from us, and it is offering attractions to our youths and maidens so alluring that they are leaving us alone, and following after it along “the primrose path that leads to everlasting bonfire.” Are we altogether guiltless of their blood? What is their real reason for ignoring us as they do?

“Why is so much noble and courageous spiritual effort by our parish priests utterly wasted? Why are they often heartbroken at the spiritual apathy of their flock? Is it not because their efforts are misdirected, and because that in tolerating

an unchristian organization of industry they are shirking the real battle with evil? They send their children out to fight a foe whom they have never fought themselves. The boy and girl at fourteen years of age, with the glow of their confirmation fresh upon them, are sent out to spend the greater part of their daily life in an atmosphere of materialism from which every spiritual value has been eliminated. This godless, soulless, inhuman, impersonal, mechanical system of industry bleeds them white of all true vitality by exhausting toil. It destroys their sense of beauty to which God would appeal in His revelation of Himself. It disintegrates the family. It has destroyed home life. It lowers every high ideal. It deadens every activity of his soul. It destroys every spiritual value. Boy after boy comes back to his friend wounded and bleeding from his first brave battle to preserve his honor and integrity and truthfulness in business with the bitter cry, 'It is impossible to be a Christian in business.' "

We do not forget the noble efforts of many business men to sanctify this system. But it is impossible really to sanctify what is wrong in principle, and an economic based solely on the acquisitive instinct and the unrestrained selfishness of the individual cannot be made to serve God's purpose.

Carry the Gospel into the Workshop •

So we say to our brethren in the ministry: Why do you complain of apathy and indifference when you tolerate a materialistic organization of industry which stifles the souls of men? Why don't you issue forth from the sanctuary, and carry your Gospel of Divine Humanity into the workshop where the battle is being fought? You are right in believing that in the Catholic Faith is the only hope for the redemption of mankind. But you are wrong in narrowing your Catholicism to the sanctuary and the home. No religion is Catholic which does not claim the whole of the life of every man and of all mankind – domestic, industrial, commercial, national, international and ecclesiastical – for God; and the future as well as the past.

"It is not enough to grope about with canonists and antiquarians among the grave-clothes of the past, with a merely backward look, as though the Holy Spirit had left the Church some centuries ago. We must try to seize the opportunity of the future. We must change the Catholicism of the Tombs for the Catholicism of the Mountain-tops, with its world-wide vision, and a heart on fire with missionary zeal and social enthusiasm" (*The Return of Christendom*, pp. 236-237).

Now, let us not be thinking of some far-off places to which these remarks may be applicable. Examine this pregnant passage just quoted and ask yourselves in all sincerity and honesty if it is not full of local color, if it is not the exact history of every parish in every big city and town in this country today. How much influence

do we exert on the lives of our boys and girls after they leave our eighth grade, if we have a parochial school? What are these boys and girls reading from the age of fourteen to twenty and upwards? What is the nature of their recreational environment during these plastic years? How many lectures and conferences do they hear from those who are their spiritual guides? What in the ordinary providence of God is going to save their bodies and souls short of a miracle of divine grace which must not be presumed? If, as Leo XIII wrote, the majority of them are carrying on their tender backs an industrial yoke little better than slavery, are we moving a little finger to ease their heavy burdens?

The Church Has the Only Secret of Redemption

“We believe that the Church in her Catholic complex of dogma, discipline and devotion, in her social principles of faith, freedom and fellowship has the only secret of man’s redemption in binding men together into a living fellowship with God. If she will purge herself from worldliness, idolatry and selfishness and stake her life on establishing the Kingdom of God among men; if she will issue forth from the sanctuary to claim for Christ the absolute dominion over the whole life of man, to enthrone Him as King over our social relationships and our industrial and commercial activities, as well as over our individual life; if she will concentrate all her energies at whatever cost on giving social and economic expression to her Faith, then Christ will return to reign over us and the kingdom of the world will become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ” (*The Return of Christendom*, p. 244).

Mutato nomine, de te fabula narratur.

Which being interpreted, means a Neo-Mediaeval civilization must take the place of this present abortion, this aftermath of Christianity in which we are condescendingly tolerated, as long as we remain content with merely playing at being Catholics.

Article XIV

How the Church Built Up European Civilization

Serfdom is a word that conveys a rather vague meaning to the average citizen, and therefore he is certain that he knows what it means, or to be more exact, what it meant in times past. He thinks that it is in some way connected with Feudalism, and this again he believes is the same as Mediaevalism. All these institutions, he thinks, existed in the Dark Ages which he again believes were the same as the Middle Ages. All these things were bad, and happened in Europe before people began to be educated. The Catholic Church, of course, was the cause of all of them.

His reason for holding this last opinion is that every time he has seen these words in print, that was the insinuation, and since the modern mind is of the blotting paper variety, everything that it sees in print leaves a corresponding impression, if it is read often enough.

As a matter of historical fact, of course, the serf and the Church were pretty good friends. The Dark Ages were really dark, and serfs existed at that time, and a little later. The Dark Ages could be made to date from the year 500 to 1000 A. D. The Middle Ages followed the Dark Ages and fall into the period, say, from 1000 to 1500 A. D. The reason the Dark Ages were dark was that the Church was not in most of these savage countries of Europe at all during the period of darkness. As soon as she got there, she immediately brightened things up, and when she got all the lights turned on, they were not dark any more, they were Mediaeval or Middle Ages, the brightest and most glorious period of European history.

Modern Times

Modern times may be made to date from 1500 to 1914, and after that the Deluge. A half-educated individual that thinks he knows everything is a very prevalent type of the modern mind. Its content due to early environment, is made up of a vague conglomeration of facts "that mostly ain't so at all."

This intellectual baggage is a great handicap, as its bearer is very prejudiced against real facts ever afterwards. This type of modern mind believes that civilization existed before the Dark Ages, and began to exist again after them. It believes there was no civilization, or progress, or education, or art, or anything worthwhile, between the years 500 and 1500 A. D. The Church dominated everything during that period. No enlightenment was possible, therefore, until the grand and glorious Reformation came upon the scene. That was the cause and the origin of all modern progress in the arts and sciences, literature, industry, liberty, democracy and education.

If anybody is so dense that he cannot see that, he is deplorably un-American and should go back to where he came from, because sooner or later he is going to be a menace to our free institutions, and is liable to be caught some time treasonably and blasphemously smiling at the attempts to enforce the eighteenth amendment on one hundred and ten millions of American citizens, the most law-abiding people on the face of the Earth!

Work of the Church

If one takes the trouble to look at a map of the Roman Empire in the beginning of the Christian era, he will learn that all around the border of the Roman world

there dwelt thinly settled barbarian peoples. The Catholic Church did not keep them savages because she did not exist as yet. Her first work was confined to the empire's conversion. Before the empire fell, Christian missions spread the faith through Persia, Armenia, Georgia, Abyssinia, even in China, southern Arabia, in the East; among the Visigoths and Ostrogoths in the west, though in the form of Arianism, and among other Teutonic tribes, notably the Burgundians and Vandals. Christianity had high hopes at times during these centuries. An independent literature was in process of development, Greek and Latin, with its echoes in Syriac, Armenian, Coptic and Ethiopie. This new learning was original and pregnant, capable of inspiring ten centuries to come with great ideas, and of molding new vernaculars to transmit the same.

This was the period of the great Church of the Fathers, Greek and Latin. Any Boobus Americanus who thinks that education started when he took a course in athletics in some bucolic high school should take a look at the collected works of these fathers in some library. This was the period of Church history that had such attraction for a mind like that of John Henry Cardinal Newman, the renowned Fellow of Oriel who got his polished education in that famous mediaeval institution, the great University of Oxford. You are all acquainted with his classic apostrophe to the Greek Fathers:

Let heathen sing thy heathen praise,
 Fall'n Greece! the thought of holier days
 In my sad heart abides;
 For sons of thine in Truth's first hour
 Were tongues and weapons of His power,
 Born of the Spirit's fiery shower,
 Our fathers and our guides.

All thine is Clement's varied page;
 And Dionysius, ruler sage,
 In days of doubt and pain;
 And Origen with eagle eye;
 And saintly Basil's purpose high
 To smite imperial heresy,
 And cleanse the Altar's stain.

From thee the glorious preacher came,
 With soul of zeal and lips of flame,
 A court's stern martyr-guest;
 And thine, O inexhaustive race!
 Was Nazianzen's heaven-taught grace;

And royal-hearted Athanase,
With Paul's own mantel blessed.

Some of these great names were graduates of the University of Athens which flourished even yet. If we were not so stupidly conceited in our ignorance in this present enlightened age, when scarcely one college graduate in a thousand is able to decipher the Greek alphabet, we might find ourselves unconsciously groping after a stray beam of the light of these forgotten vanished ages, to the tune of Newman's best known hymn:

Lead Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home –
Lead thou me on!

The Church and the empire grew up together for four hundred years and then there was a gradual decline in the power of the central government. Gradually the power of the central monarchy ceased to be exercised and felt from either Rome or Constantinople, but fell into the hands of a number of local governments. As the sun of the empire sets, the star of the Papacy and the Church is in the ascendant. Unfortunately for the hopes of Christianity, the apparition of Islam appears along the line of the eastern provinces of the empire.

The overthrow by Heraclius of the Persian Chosroes (628) did not stay the rapidity of the propagation of Islam. "Its success, brought about by a skillful or lucky combination of fanaticism, toleration, cajolery, sensual concessions, positive and negative proselytism, closed the Orient to Greek Christianity, and shut up the great heart of the empire between unelastic, unsympathetic politics, east and west."

Barbarian Incursions

The barbarian incursions over the borders of the empire in the fifth and sixth centuries were slight skirmishes compared to this new onslaught. The mighty struggles of the Dark Ages took place in the eighth, ninth and especially in the tenth century. Europe seemed doomed and yet Europe lived. "Europe was just barely saved. It was saved by the sword and by the intense Christian ideal which nerved the sword arm. But it was only just barely saved." The Mohammedan and savage barbarian nations were rushing in to annihilate the old decaying empire and the young growing Roman Catholic Church. By the way, the eighteenth amendment to our immortal constitution, was from the beginning an article of Mohammed's religion, that intense and vividly anti-Christian thing, that has so justly merited the execration of civilization for now thirteen hundred years, an

abomination of desolation at the Golden Horn. North Africa was lost to the empire. Mohammedan forces crossed the straits of Gibraltar, and in a few months the whole Spanish Peninsula was overrun, that strong outpost even unto this day of ancient Roman and Catholic culture. The hard Iberian land was lost. Waves of these Asiatic hordes swept up to the Pyrenees. Christendom had its back Haig-like to the wall. Gaul was invaded. Southern Italy was raided and partly occupied. One by one the islands of the Mediterranean fell.

“Against this sudden successful spring which had lopped off half the west (and nearly all the east), the Dark Ages, and especially the French of the Dark Ages, spent a great part of their military energy. The Knights of Northern Spain and the Chiefs of the unconquered valleys recruited their forces perpetually from Gaul beyond the Pyrenees, and the northern valley of the Ebro, the high plains of Castile and Leon, were the training ground of European valor for three hundred years.”

And then the Scandinavian pirates came down from the frozen Northland. They infested and harried the coasts of Britain and Gaul and the Netherlands. Their sails appeared even in the southern seas. Their object was pillage and had no attraction to the civilized Roman lands save loot. Alfred, the last independent king of Britain, was in hiding. France had been sacked up to the gates of Paris. This was in the last quarter of the ninth century. Britain and Gaul triumphed in this same generation and Christendom was saved again.

Christendom Assaulted in Vain

From the east, the south, the west and north barbarism assaulted Christendom in vain. Charlemagne had extended Europe to the Elbe, even beyond the limits of the empire. The monks of Ireland and Britain evangelized the Germanic peoples. This line of defense was also attacked by pagan Slav and Mongol. Civilization was periled from this quarter for yet another half century longer. But Christendom was finally victorious. Christianity and civilization fought and triumphed together.

So, now you see the Church was not the cause of the Dark Ages at all. She was not the cause of the barbarism that tried so hard from all directions to destroy civilization in Europe. There was not much leisure time for learning during these centuries, to be sure. It was during these Dark Ages of Europe that Ireland became the training school of saints and scholars. During this long tenebrae Ireland alone was the altar of intellectual repose. The Carolingian schools got their teachers from there and her monastic missionaries rebaptized western Europe in the old Faith.

Not only did Christendom conquer the barbarian, but it converted and educated and civilized him. It met him first illiterate, a pagan, and a savage, and left him after its contact a scholar, a Catholic, a gentleman and a knight. It met him with a

sword in one hand and a cross in the other. Augustine landed in England in 596. Irish monks restored Christian discipline there in 633. The conversion of the island was completed in about 688.

The Alemans and Suabians were converted by Irish monks about the year 750. Kilian converted the Thuringians in the latter half of the seventh century. The Saxon Winifred became St. Boniface, 680-754, who evangelized Germany. Willibrod, 690-730, worked among the Frisians of the Netherlands. Anschar went out from Corbie to Denmark in 826. In the eleventh century Sweden received the seeds of Christianity. The Northmen who harried the continent were converted in the raided lands, as in Ireland, England and Normandy. Iceland and Greenland received Christianity about the year 1000. The Slavs received Saints Cyril and Methodius about 863. The Wends, between the Elbe and the Oder, became Christians about the latter half of the tenth century. Serbia and Bulgaria received Christianity from their conquerors about 868. The following century saw the conversion of the Varangian descendants of the tribe of Russ, the founder of Russia. Otto I broke the power of the Hungarians at the battle of Lech in 955. They became Christians in the reign of King Stephen the Pious, 897-1038.

Our Ancestors

Here, then, are our ancestors and they were not all Anglo-Saxons, and here is the Catholic Church, and here is the end of the Dark Ages. "A certain detritus of ancient culture was preserved as sacred fire, which would one day quicken into mediaeval literature and art. The Church itself was now just such a society as was needed by the barbarian tribes: motherly and compassionate where they were rude and violent; universal where they were splintered into infinite sections; refined, where they were coarse and uncouth; related intimately to all past history, peoples and civilization, where they were but emerging from their forests."

Article XV

The Church and the Serf in the Dark Ages

We have got some idea now of the tremendous undertaking which faced the Church during the Dark Ages. For almost six hundred years the fate of Europe and of civilization hung in the balance. Christianity saved Europe and Europe saved civilization. Europe christianized and civilized was Christendom. This was Europe until the Reformation. The Dark Ages and the Middle Ages together make up the Great Thousand Years. The most august, the most sublime institution in all Europe during these ten centuries was the Catholic Church. There was no other Church.

Over against the Church, supreme in spiritual things, stood the Holy Roman Empire, supreme in temporal things. Europe was one unified society under the Papacy and the Empire. “The theory of the Mediaeval Empire is that of an universal Christian monarchy. The Roman Empire and the Catholic Church are two aspects of one society, a society ordained by the divine will to spread itself over the whole world. Of this society Rome is marked out by divine decree as the predestined capital, the chief seat alike of spiritual and of temporal rule. At the head of this society, in its temporal character as an empire, stands the temporal chief of Roman Christendom, the Roman Caesar. At its head, in its spiritual character as a Church, stands the spiritual chief of Christendom, the Roman Pontiff. Caesar and Pontiff alike rule by divine right, each as God’s immediate Vicar within his own sphere. Each ruler is bound to the other by the closest ties. The Caesar is the Advocate of the Roman Church, bound to defend her by the temporal arm against all temporal enemies. The Pontiff, on the other hand, though the Caesar holds his rank, not of him, but by an independent divine commission, has the lofty privilege of admitting the Lord of the World to his high office, of hallowing the Lord’s anointed, and of making him in some sort a partaker in the mysterious privileges of the priesthood.” – (Freeman, “The Holy Roman Empire,” *Essays*.)

Men of Religion

This was the splendid conception of authority, civil and ecclesiastical, that dominated every other glory of this Middle Age. The long night of the Dark Age gave place to all the splendors of this glorious day. “Senseless man, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die first.” (I Cor. xv, 36.)

“The crowd of unknown saints whose names fill the calendars and live, some of them, only in the titles of our churches, mainly represent the age of heroic spiritual ventures, of which we see glimpses in the story of St. Boniface, the Apostle of Germany; of St. Columban and St. Gall wandering from Ireland to reclaim the barbarians of the Burgundian deserts, and of the shores of the Swiss lakes.

“It was among men like these – men who were termed emphatically ‘men of religion’ – that the new races first saw the example of life ruled by a great and serious purpose, which yet was not one of ambition or the excitement of war; a life of deliberate and steady industry, of hard and uncomplaining labor; a life as full of activity in peace, of stout and brave work as a warrior’s was wont to be – in the camp, on the march, in the battle. It was in these men, and in the Christianity which they taught, and which inspired and governed them, that the fathers of our modern nations first saw exemplified the sense of human responsibility; first

learned the nobleness of a ruled and disciplined life; first enlarged their thoughts of the uses of existence; first were taught the dignity and sacredness of honest toil.

“These great axioms of modern life passed silently from the special homes of religious employment to those of civil; from the cloisters and cells of men, who, when they were not engaged in worship, were engaged in field work or book work – clearing the forest, extending cultivation, multiplying manuscripts – to the guild of the craftsman, the shop of the trader, the study of the scholar. Religion generated and fed these ideas of what was manly and worthy in man. Once started, they were reinforced from other sources; thought and experience enriched, corrected, and coordinated them. But it was the power and sanction of a religion and a creed which first broke men into their yoke that now seems so easy, gradually wrought their charm over human restlessness, and indolence, and pride, gradually reconciled mankind to the ideas and the ideas to mankind, gradually impressed them on that vague but yet real thing which we call the general thought and mind of a nation.” – (Dean Church, *Christianity and the Teutonic Races*, p. 241.)

The Old Calumny

These ripe scholars who pay such splendid tribute to the civilizing influence of the Catholic Church in the Dark Ages were non-Catholics. Why does the old calumny persist, then, that the Church loves to keep the world in darkness because she kept it dark and ignorant and barbarous until Reformation enlightenment came to dispel the clouds that hung over intellectual Europe? The only reason is that it has been repeated so often by ignorant and half-educated people that they begin to believe in the end that it is true, all the facts of history to the contrary notwithstanding.

Oh, yes, but how do you account for the existence of the serf? The institution of serfdom was only a little better than slavery? We suppose you want to know why the Church didn't make all the serfs millionaires, a feat Protestantism has succeeded in accomplishing in our times! Our answer is that the Church found the serf nearly a slave and made a freeman out of him in due time.

She was not the cause of serfdom any more than she was the cause of the Dark Ages in which serfdom existed. It took a violent physical struggle, and an intense physical effort to save Europe at all from the savage attack against civilized man made by Islam and barbarian alike. The Church won. After winning, the Church, instead of being surrounded and supported by Roman civilization as in the first five hundred years of her existence, found herself living in the midst of the Feudal system. Feudalism was a direct result of the military struggle carried on during these centuries so briefly reviewed. We have a fairly accurate idea of what Feudalism was, but exactly how it came into existence is even still largely a matter

of conjecture. Perhaps the following theory is as good as any other in accounting for the facts.

Feudalism

After the breakup of the Roman Empire, Europe was overrun by barbarian tribes. Orderly government had broken down. There are always to be found at such periods men of prey who take full advantage of their opportunities for plunder. Brigands or robber knights, if you prefer a nicer word, made their appearance everywhere in Western Europe and preyed on the quiet and more industrious part of the population. These hard-working people found it necessary and very expedient to be permanently organized for self-preservation. It was necessary for the community to carry on a dual vocation of agriculture and self-defense.

Thus did part of the clan become fighting men, while another part agreed to support these more adventurous spirits in return for the military security they afforded them. In these good old days, men were not too proud to fight for their rights. Out of this arrangement gradually arose the Feudal manor, the fighting men becoming a class apart, claiming rights and privileges over the non-combatant section of the citizens. The chieftains of the fighting men became the lords of the manors, the soldiers were their retainers. They would sally forth from their strong places and impose their lordship on other weaker clans, and divide the conquered territory among their victorious followers. These conquered peoples became the serfs. In some cases the Feudal bond would be the result of contract or agreement, because some district would lack the mighty protection of some powerful overlord.

“Briefly it was this: the passing of actual government from the hands of the old Roman provincial centers of administration into the hands of each small local society and its lord. On such a basis there was a reconstruction of society from below: these local lords associating themselves under greater men, and these again holding together in great national groups under a national overlord. In the violence of the struggle through which Christendom passed, town and village, valley and castle, had often to defend itself alone.” (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc.)

A Great Change

The Church has changed the slave of more barbaric times into the serf of these beginnings of the Middle Ages. He could no longer be bought and sold like chattels. Lords might transfer the soil to which he was inseparably attached, but he tilled the land for his own benefit, and for his family, and built them a permanent home thereon. He paid some rent to his master, and fought by his side in battle. It was not complete freedom, but it was slavery greatly mitigated.

The Church was not satisfied with the condition of serfdom. She put forth every effort to better the condition. She provided for the serfs' moral and religious welfare and the enforcement of laws protecting them in whatever legal rights they had. Economically their lot was not so hard as that of the majority of laborers today. Their person and property were their own. Their services to the feudal lord were restricted to certain days and seasons. The Church in Germany and England imposed severe penances, sometimes of two or three years' duration, for selling serfs. Masters guilty of killing a serf were treated as if they had killed a freeman. She defended him not only in his rights against the powerful, but when he was in need through sickness or misfortune she took him into her hospices, clothed and fed and sheltered him.

The Church could no more abolish serfdom altogether without a bloody revolution than she could abolish slavery in the Roman Empire, still she was now as interested in the welfare of the serf as she had been formerly in that of the slave. Great numbers of serfs were liberated completely under her benign influence. So great was this influence of the Church during these ages in ameliorating the lot of the serf population in all the countries of Europe that even most prejudiced writers, even Socialists who hate the Church, are forced to admit, with Kirkup, that "the Christian Church did much to soften and abolish slavery and serfdom."

Serfs were freely admitted to the priesthood. There was no dignity in the power of the Church to bestow which might not be attained by the humblest serf; and this at a time when, as the Protestant historian, Kemble, writes, the great Anglo-Saxon civilization did not legally recognize the very existence of the serf. The Church, according to another great authority, effected in spite of all opposition that the lot of the serf was not one of great hardship. "It seems doubtful the labor exacted was more severe practically, or his remuneration much less, than that of an agricultural laborer in England in 1876."

Malet Lambert declares: "That the spiritual and even temporal provisions made for the serf, attached according to the custom of the day to the land of some conscientious Catholic master, might well be envied by countless laborers in our modern civilization."

Serfdom in Other Countries

What was true of England in this respect was equally true of other European countries. Lugenheim, in his history of serfdom in Europe, says splendid things in praise of Catholicity, in spite of inveterate prejudices against the Church. Like all historians, he admits the proverbial saying, that it was good for the serf to dwell under Episcopal rule. "In France the emancipation of serfs and hereditary tenants

took place earliest in the ecclesiastical dominions where, indeed, the condition of the dependent classes was always the most favorable.” (Lugenheim.)

The resolution of Saint Cnut in Scandinavia to abolish serfdom entirely in his dominions he ascribes solely to the priesthood. “Of course, the last portion of the eleventh century was not yet ripe for this. The clergy nevertheless worked with indescribable zeal to hasten the time for it.” The Protestant historian, Kemble, thus writes of the Catholic clergy in Anglo-Saxon days: “Whatever their class interests may from time to time have led them to do, let it be remembered that they existed as a permanent mediating authority between the rich and the poor, the strong and the weak, and that, to their eternal honor, they fully comprehended and performed the duties of this noble position. To none but them would it have been permitted to stay the strong hand of power, to mitigate the just severity of the law, to hold out a glimmer of hope to the serf, to find a place in the world and a provision for the destitute, whose existence the state did not even recognize.” (Kemble, *The Saxons in England*, II, pp. 374-375.)

We will go on in our next article vindicating the glorious record made by the Catholic Church in her treatment of the serf. As Roman Catholics we ought to be very proud of the accomplishments of our Church as her economic historic records prove that all the facts are in her favor. Above all let us not get excited about any artificial or antiquarian reconstruction of the mediaeval world. “Those who understand the Catholic tradition of Christianity are not offering a Church which is exclusively at issue with modern things, or even one that was exclusively expressed in mediaeval things. The point is not so much that that age was relatively right while this age was relatively wrong; it is rather that the Church was relatively right when all ages were relatively wrong. Even if the modern man’s doubt goes no farther than balancing sweating against serfdom, or swindling financiers against robber barons, it will imply the need of some third thing, some authority above the ages, to hold the balance. History has produced only one thing that can ever claim to hold it.” (Chesterton’s “Epilogue” to *The Return of Christendom*.) That one thing is nothing else than the Holy Roman Catholic Church.

Article XVI

Lot of the Serf and Wage-Earner Compared

The early days of the Reformation were given over to all sorts of religious doubts. At the present stage the mass of men are not generally interested enough in religion to have any religious doubts. Could one possibly imagine a heated debate on a street car during the rush hours on, say, the canonicity of the Catholic Epistle of St. James, or, outside of a few streets in Belfast, could you imagine a skull fractured because two citizens could not see eye to eye on the Primacy of Peter?

But at the present day there are all sorts of doubts, and freely expressed, about economic things.

The majority of people now-a-days do not possess enough Christian doctrine to calumniate intelligently either a Pope or a Crusade. All the theological links of the chains that men thought bound them to the pre-Reformation prison have been forgotten one after another. As a matter of fact, they have forgotten even the prison. But men are beginning to ask if the escape from prison was not literally a step from the frying pan into the fire.

Nobody in his senses of course believes that all men in Mediaeval times were as wise and happy as saints, but there were great numbers of happy men, and a great number of happy saints in those times. Working people now are so serious that you would never hear one of them singing or whistling even at their work. A machine sings for them at home, because there is no song of joy in their hearts. You know the kind of hard, plodding, grim men that get biographical notice in the *American Magazine*, for example. All begin on three-fifty a week, work seventeen hours a day, go into partnership in the firm, and come down from Wall Street on a special train to break the deadlock in a party caucus by naming the next President of the United States.

If a little war starts somewhere that maims or kills twenty or thirty millions of young men, these lucky people rush in to offer their services at a dollar a year to their governments. But these heroes of industrial romance are the exceptions. The big masses are thinking hard about this system, that has not delivered all the goods that its authors guaranteed away back to their forefathers, if only they promised to curse the Pope hard enough. No matter how poor or how hard-worked, everybody seems to think audibly that post-Reformation civilization as they see it is not such a great blessing after all.

As Chesterton Puts It

“No man can go to his grave, or go to his shop or his office, without knowing all about the good or evil of modern machinery. We can, therefore, truly ask what the modern machinery has done with the mass of men; we might almost put it in the form of asking how it has manufactured the mass of men. And that comparison, though full of complexities like all historical things, is capable of a certain large simplification. The modern change found the mass of men living on the land, and it turned them out on to the road. It is quite true that they were originally called slaves on the land and were later called free men on the road; and we will give all due importance to such names. The road may be a symbol of liberty and the furrow of slavery; but the object here is to sum up the realities that were so symbolized. The point is, that the modern spirit, as such, certainly did not tend to make the serf

in the field the master of the field; but only to make him the master of the feet with which he walked in his freedom along the king's highway. He could only take his chance of selling his labor to this man or that; and I do not undervalue the fact that it was in form a free contract, even when it was in fact a leonine contract. But it certainly is the fact that his economic position as a modern wage-earner is less secure even than his position when he was a feudal serf, and far less dignified than when he had the luck to be a free guildsman. If I say that there is at least a doubt, touching the mass of men, whether their lot has been improved at all by the vast rational revolution of the last four hundred years, I am deliberately adopting a tone of restraint and even of understatement. For I wish to emphasize the fact that all people who think, and not merely our own school of thinkers, have by this time reached that degree of doubt. Nobody is certain that Capitalism has been a success; nobody is certain that Industrialism can solve its own problems; nobody is certain that these problems were not solved better in the ages of faith. The revolution has revolved: the wheel has come full circle; the world has run its own course. And the world itself is doubtful of its goal. The world itself has lost its way. There is in it a doubt far deeper than what is commonly called religious doubt. It might be called irreligious doubt; or a doubt about the ideal wisdom even of irreligion. The Church, being an object of faith, is in some sense naturally an object of doubt. But modern men are not merely in doubt about what they believe, but about what they know. They are not merely questioning what they are told to do; they are questioning what they have done. What they have done is to destroy charity for the sake of competition, and then to turn their own competition into monopoly. What they have done is to turn both peasants and guildsmen into the employed, and then turn these into the unemployed. They trampled on a hundred humanities of piety and pity in order to rush after Free Trade; and their Free Trade has been so free that it has brought them within a stride of the Servile State. They gave up their shrines and their sacred hostels to the pleasure of an aristocracy, only to find that their aristocracy no longer consisted of aristocrats, or even of gentlemen. They have laid the world waste with the dreariest and most abject atheism, only to find, that their very atheism has cleared a space for the return of the most fantastic superstitions of crystals and mascots. They have built a city of houses only notable for the size of the ground rent, and the smallness of the ground-plan; a city of whose wealth and poverty they are alike ashamed; a city from which they themselves flee into the country, and which they themselves cannot prevent from crawling outwards into the country to pursue them. But upon all these things the modern man looks doubtfully and with a double mind; for they are the fulfillments of his own doctrines of science and free thought; and it would be strange if some broken and half-forgotten sentence did not sometimes begin to form itself in his mind. "Unless the Lord built . . ." – (Chesterton, "Epilogue" to *The Return of Christendom*).

The Only Way Out

No wonder then that so many people at present are thinking that the only way out is the way back. That is one of the principal reasons why a little review of past economic history is so necessary. But you will say, must Feudalism be restored ? Not exactly, but the spirit of the feudal time can and must be restored. “ The return to antiquity; what is meant by this ? One thing assuredly is not meant—that we should return to it in the spirit of the fifteenth century. It is not necessary to ape the past, to don its apparel, to affect its wisdom, to enforce upon ourselves its old inconveniences. No. The return to antiquity implies only one thing—a return to the attitude of the past and that. is particularly for us the Middle Ages; a return to the Mediaeval attitude to life and to the knowledge of life as evidenced in religion and education; for these two are inseparable.” (The Return to Mediaevalism, John U. S. Allison, Ph. D.)

That modern workers are as happy as even the serf of the Middle Ages could be hardly maintained. The spirit of former times is lacking. Without this spirit of antiquity, this mediaeval attitude to life, no amount of worldly goods can possibly make men happy. The serf had not a great abundance of these things but his wants were fewer also:

For him light labor spread her wholesome store,
Just gave what life required, but gave no more;
His best companions, innocence and health;
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth.

The People in Norman Days

The majority of the population of England in Norman days were “villeins.” The Normans conquered England at the battle of Hastings, October 14, 1066. “Villeins” is derived from villagers. They were not exactly slaves. They could neither be sold nor deprived of their lands. They paid no rent for the use of the land which they cultivated for their own exclusive benefit and handed down to their children as their own inalienable right. Still they were not entirely free because they were attached to the soil, and they were bound to stay on it. Instead of rent they gave personal service to the lord of the manor who reserved a portion of arable land to himself called the “Demesne.” The villein worked on the demesne two or three days a week and also did odd jobs known as “corvée,” from the French word meaning statute labor. He supplied his master also with certain provisions and helped him at the harvest for a few days called “boon days.” So

happy was the villein that he often preferred to work entirely for the lord of the manor, keeping a little garden or small plot of ground for himself.

In the beginning of this period a class of slaves existed also which soon disappeared. There was a class of smaller tenants known as bordars, crofters and cotters. This lord of the manor was nothing like our modern landlord at all. He was a gentleman by birth and a fighting captain by profession. He dwelt for the most part in a fortified castle and was able to protect the population round about when they were attacked by marauding bands of robbers that infested the forests, or by the pirates or pagan Vikings from the sea.

A powerful leader was a grim necessity, with trained men at arms, and weapons ready for the fray. The villagers gladly rallied round the lordly manor and the strong keep of the mediaeval castle. They gave their toil at stated days and seasons for this protection. No very centralized governments existed in those days. The lord of the manor owed allegiance and rendered fealty to another still above himself, so as to have a bigger unit of defense in case of attack, and so on in the interest of self-protection.

The Feudal System

This was the feudal system after the days of William the Conqueror. It existed of course long before. It was never a uniform and logical system. The feudal land was held in various ways and on various terms. Perhaps the serfs never exceeded sixteen per cent of the population, the figure given in the Domesday Book. There were also at this time free tenants who did no regular work for the manor, but whose services were required at certain periods, such as harvest time.

The principle of the feudal system was most reasonable in all the circumstances of the time. "Although the system was in no way uniform in the majority of cases, it probably worked fairly well, for the relation between the lords and the serfs was an essentially human one. Based upon recognized services and rights, it was not a barrier to good understanding and fellowship" (Penty, *A Guildsman's Interpretation of History*, p. 50).

Living conditions then in feudal England, like feudal Europe, were something very desirable. "It was not the horrible nightmare conjured up by lying historians, interested in painting the past as black as possible, in order to make modern conditions appear tolerable by comparison. Where there was a good lord, life would be pleasant, for the serf lived in rude plenty." It may have had its shadows and its gloom, but these were more than counterbalanced by the bright side of this early simple Christian life. Anyway, we of today have no right to say that the Church or the State in feudal days did not do more for the serf than our present

system has done for the modern wage earner since the industrial revolution of the past four hundred years has been the established order.

“On the other hand we must not forget that the tenement houses of our great cities have been crowded in the nineteenth century with people more miserable than ever was serf of the Middle Ages. The serf, at any rate, had the open air instead of a factory in which to work. When times were good he had grain and meat in plenty, and possibly wine or cider, and he hardly envied the tapestried chambers, the bejeweled clothes, and the spiced foods of the nobility, for he looked upon them as belonging to a different world.”

Where Noble and Peasant Were Equal

“In one place noblemen and peasant met on a common footing – in the village church. There, on Sundays and feastdays, they came together as Christians to hear Mass; and afterwards, perhaps, holiday games and dancing on the green, benignantly patronized by the lord’s family, helped the common folk to forget their labors. The village priest, himself often of humble birth, though the most learned man on the manor, was at once the friend and benefactor of the poor and the spiritual doctor of the lord. Occasionally a visit of the Bishop to administer confirmation to the children afforded an opportunity for gaiety and universal festivity.” (Carlton J. H. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Europe*, Vol. I, pp. 35-36.)

Damaschke, an eminent authority on Mediaeval economics, declares that a degree of general social welfare and true popular happiness was reached under the feudal system which surpasses our very conception. No wonder Father Husslein, S. J., writes: “As for more modern times, what was the end of all the vaunted civilization of the smug, self-satisfied nineteenth century except boundless dissatisfaction, unhappiness and not seldom abject misery such as the Middle Ages never knew? A clarification of our social vision is sadly needed, and this we trust our study of those same ages at their height of development will give to us, in the picture of that Christian democracy of industry that was at length to be reached as the economic realization of their Catholic ideals” (Husslein, *Democratic Industry*, p. 78).

Article XVII

The Church Not Allied to Any Type of Civilization

We think we have proved that the Church and the serf were what we said they were, pretty good friends. That feudalism was not the same as the caricature of it presented by historians with a strong materialistic bias is also, we think,

demonstrated by an appeal to the facts. The *raison d'être* of feudalism passed away when kings centralized all power in themselves and became the sole responsible protectors of the realm. We can see how manorial lords could begin to be parasites in these changed circumstances; now living on the toil of the peasantry without performing any social or economic service in return. When these things came to pass we were on the eve of the Reformation.

Slavery was born again. The peasants felt their grievances and fought the lord or fled to the free cities. The leaders of the Reformation, even Luther himself, sided with the lords against the serfs, and the peasants' war practically ended for a time the Reformation. This alliance of the Protestant Church with the oppressors of the peasants crushed their hopes of freedom for generations. In England, serfdom had disappeared about the sixteenth century. In France, remnants of it existed down to the French Revolution. In some other countries it existed well into the nineteenth century, and in Russia until about fifty years ago.

Laborers' Conditions

The tyranny and oppression of an institution that has outlived its usefulness drove the villeins to become day-laborers in the cities. The personal labor for the lord was changed into money payments for work done for him by the villagers. Yet even in the declining days of feudalism in the latter Middle Ages, the condition of the feudal serf was far preferable to the conditions of wage earners existing in the so-called progressive cities of our own century and country. And yet, one hears, at times, uncommon denunciation of feudalism, and, of course, unconscious repetition of some of the slanders that have passed for a history of the Dark and Middle Ages, slanders that were due in the first instance to a one-sided, distorted, materialist conception of history.

"Such theories gain credence today because capitalism has undermined all the great traditions of the past, and thus emptied life of its contents. It is true that by the light of the materialist conception considerable patches of history, including the history of the present day, may be explained. It is true of the later history of Greece and Rome as of Europe after the Reformation; for in the decline of all civilizations the material factor comes to predominate. But as an explanation of history as a whole and of the Mediaeval period in particular, it is most demonstrably false, and only ignorance, if not the deliberate falsification in the past, of Mediaeval history could have made such an explanation plausible. It is important that this should be recognized, not merely because it is an injustice to the past to have its reality distorted, but because of its reaction upon the mind of today. It makes all the difference to our thinking about the problems of the present day whether we believe modern society has developed from a social system which was inhuman

and based upon class tyranny, in which ignorance and superstition prevailed, or from one which enjoyed freedom and understood the nature of liberty in its widest and most philosophic sense. If a man believes that society in the past was based upon class tyranny, he will see everything in an inverted perspective, he will be predisposed to support all the forces of social disintegration which masquerades under the name of ‘progress,’ because he will view with suspicion all traditions which have survived from the past, and have a prejudice against all normal forms of social organization. If it be true that the Middle Ages was a time of tyranny, ignorance and superstition, then to a logically minded person it naturally follows that the emancipation of the people is bound up with the destruction of such traditions as have survived, for to such a mind tradition and tyranny become synonymous terms. But if, on the contrary, he knows that such was not the case, that the Middle Ages was an age of real enlightenment, he will not be so readily deceived. He will know how to estimate at their proper value the movements he sees around him, and not be so disposed to place his faith in quack remedies, for he will know that, for the masses, the transition from the Middle Ages has not been one from bondage to freedom, from poverty to well-being, but from security to insecurity, from status to wage-slavery, from well-being to poverty. He will know, moreover, that the servile state is not a new menace, but that it has been extending its tentacles ever since the days when Roman Law was revived.” (Penty, *A Guildsman’s Interpretation of History*, pp. 7 and 8.)

An Opinion of Weight

There is the opinion of a man whom Chesterton places among the three or four most original thinkers of today. And G. K. Chesterton is no mean critic. And we say it with all the emphasis at our command, Arthur Penty is not saying something very original in this passage. He is only stating a great truth of history, and that is original only on the assumption of the proverb’s truth, that fact is stranger than fiction, even when the fiction has long been passing current for the history of the Roman Catholic Church during the greatest thousand years of her Divine life and influence, from the year 500 to 1500 A. D.

A good deal of the ignorant contempt expressed for things and institutions Mediaeval is also due to another cause, and there is less reason why this should be a motive for accepting false appraisals of Catholic ages than the one already referred to. It is that we all, Catholics no less than non-Catholics, have been enamored of an industrial system which is identified in our minds with civilization and progress to such an extent that we find it hard to imagine even that its change or elimination must not spell the end of the world. A philosophy has been invented to bolster up such notions, viz., “Whatever is, is right.” It reminds us of the state of

mind of some patriots and churchmen towards the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.

“And indeed to them the end of the Roman civilization was the end of the world. If all that is beautiful in life – style, wealth, well-being, public games, literature, arts, refined social manners – was to be suppressed; and if a flood of barbarism was to be let loose upon a world radiant, charming, thrilling with the joy of life, would it not mean death to the human race itself? Thus they all said and felt. For to admit for a single moment that the human race could get along without the Roman civilization, and that the future of the former was not indissolubly connected with the prosperity of the latter, was an absurd and impossible thought which no one entertained.

“Accordingly, when undeniable signs announced to them the fall of that civilization, the true Romans could but desire death. Some wished to fall in a last intoxication at the banquet of civilization, crowned with roses and drunk with wine; others, wrapped in the folds of the old Roman flag, awaited the fatal blow with stoic despair, even as the senators of yore, seated in their curule chairs, awaited the arrival of the Gallic conqueror. All perished with their ideals, incapable of conceiving any other, witnessing the crash of heaven and of their gods.” (*The Church at the Turning Points of History*, Kurth-Day.)

A Strange Procedure

In these days, there were found churchmen not a few who refused to preach the gospel to those whom they looked upon as the wreckers of the Roman civilization. Who were these foreign barbarians that were living this new strange life and refusing to be assimilated by the conventions of the old order? It has a great and pregnant lesson for our own times. “Entrenched in their fierce patriotism, no longer understanding anything of the progress of the world, they could but protest. Christians themselves, they were not willing that their conquerors should be called to the blessings of the Gospel, and their priests refused to communicate to the newcomers the light of the Gospel, unwilling as they were to admit that one could be both Christian and Anglo-Saxon, just as the Jews had been unwilling that one should be Christian and uncircumsised. They did not realize that in converting their conquerors they would save themselves; they preferred to perish whilst hating them, rather than to live reconciled with them.” (Kurth-Day.)

The Church thought differently then. She thinks the same way today. St. Augustine was probably the first that read aright the signs of the times. First conceived in the thought of a man of genius and nurtured by his disciples, it was carried quickly from the purely intellectual domain into stern historic reality.

The Gallic Episcopacy, represented by men like St. Remigius and St. Avitus, asked the barbarians only to become Christians. They did not insist on their becoming Romans. St. Gregory the Great, representing the Papacy, sent St. Augustine to England, fulfilling from the Lateran Palace a task which the hundred per cent Roman clergy of the Celtic Church of Britain had disdained in their ultrapatriotic blindness to assume. The gates of the Sanctuary and the road to salvation were opened to the nations. These in turn became convinced that there was no necessary connection between the sweet yoke of Christ and the heavy yoke of Rome. Joyfully then did the whole barbarian world enter the fold of the Catholic Faith.

Foresight of the Church

“If the Catholic Church had not understood her role better than the Briton clergy, if she had not risen above the resentments of blind patriotism, Christianity would not have survived, but would have sunk into the abyss along with the Roman Empire. But the Church had a steadier eye and a calmer mind; she did not despair of humanity; she did not believe that all was lost because Rome was doomed. She viewed the gigantic movement as a whole, and discovered in it the birth of a world as yet unknown. She foresaw the sublime novelty which then could have been expressed only by a monstrous coupling of words, the barbarian civilization, that is, a civilization that could get on without Rome, and which would go farther than Rome. And, undaunted, conscious of her eternal mission, she went to those who were then the heralds of destiny, and, her hand in theirs, she took the road of the future.” (Kurth-Day, *The Church at the Turning Points of History*, pp. 52-53.)

We need not the eagle sweep of St. Augustine’s genius to see that the destinies of the Church are not less free today from the fate of industrialism than were her destinies in the Dark Ages from the doom that overtook the decadent Roman civilization. The gates of Hell shall not prevail against her. At the baptism of Clovis, like that of Constantine, she passed safely the second great turning point of history. It was another magnificent gesture, like the baptism of the centurion Cornelius, by which she shook off the shackles and obligations of the Judaic Law. She now detached her destinies from the empire and put into the hands of the barbarians the scepter of the world.

“On two successive occasions, Christianity, the common patrimony of all humanity, had escaped utter destruction. Instead of weeping on the graves of extinct civilizations, Christianity had busied herself with winning to the faith of Christ the nascent communities. She had thus indicated in a precise and explicit manner, and for all centuries to come, that, as she is created to make the kingdom

of God reign on Earth, she cannot identify herself with any of these ephemeral things which are called dynasty, nation, social class, civilization. Having become the universal religion at this price, it is at this price also that she will remain such and continue to make a reality of that sublime epithet given to the Messiah: the Father of the world to come.” (Kurth-Day.)

Why should we at this particular turning point of history stake our future on the permanency of like ephemeral things? Why should we wish to die rather than see perhaps the spring of a most glorious future succeed to the winter of the spirit that has now been with us since the Reformation? Listen to the sober measured statements of a great moralist that has given the subject much patient thought.

“Let me take this opportunity to say that I deplore the actual and removable evils of our social system quite as strongly as does Mr. Hillquit. I believe that two generations hence men will look back upon the greed, materialism, oppression of labor, and hideous contrasts between wealth and poverty which characterize our time, as essential barbarism. Nor am I enamored with what has come to be known as the Capitalist Type. The attitude toward their fellows, the conception of their functions in society, and the general outlook on life prevailing among many of our rich men and women, constitute one of the most unlovely types of human psychology that have ever appeared in the select classes of any civilization.” (Dr. John A. Ryan, *Socialism, Promise or Menace*, pp. 246-247.)

God forbid that the destinies of the Spouse of Christ should ever be wedded in unnatural alliance, even in our thoughts, to this unlovely, cold and vulgar capitalistic thing.

Article XVIII

“The Unleavened Bread of Sincerity and Truth”

We are not recounting these chapters of economic Church history for any merely antiquarian reasons. It is because they point a moral rather than adorn the tale, that we ask you to look back and see what the Church did once before when things looked dark, and were rightly called so. It is good for us also to see out of what unpromising materials she began to build anew, on the ruins of a pagan civilization, another that went farther and was called Christendom.

We have no patience with men who are satisfied to have Christendom restored as a mosaic, a thing of shreds and patches, with Catholicism mixed up in the pattern only as one religion just as good as a hundred others. Catholicism is not a denomination, or a sect or a heresy. It is the Church. Beside it there is none other. “For what participation hath justice with injustice? or what fellowship hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath the faithful with the unbeliever? And what agreement hath the temple of God with

idols? For you are the temple of the living God; as God saith: I will dwell in them, and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. Wherefore go out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing. And I will receive you: and I will be a father to you: and you shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty.” (II Cor. vi, 14, 18.)

Capitalism the Poison of Christian Civilization

“One after another, the early Fathers of the Church denounced irresponsible use of wealth, and proclaimed the natural right of all men to live from the fruits of the Earth, in terms which have caused them to be accused of communism. Indeed, as the Abbot Gasquet has observed, the traditional basis of property as taught by the Church is not individualism, but Christian collectivism. For well nigh a thousand years the Church withstood all the forces and wiles of the capitalism of those days by her prohibition of interest on loans. During the period of her greatest influence, the Middle Ages, the industrial arrangements that she inspired and fostered were not capitalism and not the wage system, but an order in which the great majority of the workers virtually owned the land and actually owned the tools with which they labored.

“And if her sway had not been interrupted by the social and religious disturbances of the sixteenth century, there is hardly a shadow of a reason for doubting that this wide diffusion of productive property would have been indefinitely extended and developed. The present system, in which the few own the bulk of the means of production, while the many possess little beyond their labor power, would have been, humanly speaking, impossible.

“To a Catholic who knows something of economic history, and something of the economic aspects of Catholic teaching, the attempt to chain the Church to the car of a plutocratic capitalism is impudent and sickening.

“We all feel – and those few of us who have analyzed the matter not only feel, but know – that the capitalist society . . . has reached its term. It is almost self-evident that it cannot continue in the form which now three generations have known, and it is equally self-evident that some solution must be found for the increasing instability with which it has poisoned our lives.” (Dr. John A. Ryan, *Socialism, Promise or Menace*, pp. 247-248.)

Some Distinctions Drawn

Does Hilaire Belloc exaggerate and does Dr. Ryan exaggerate in these quoted statements? We think not. We think that anybody who would analyze the matter should be bound to come to the same sober verdicts. Their conclusions at first sight

appear extreme and shocking. But the most extreme and “radical” indictment of Capitalism with a capital “C” that has ever been made, as far as we know, was that of Leo XIII. Why milder statements are dubbed socialistic, cannot be solved by any intelligent investigation of the matter under discussion. Capitalism, according to Leo, has placed upon the teeming masses of the working poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself. Now the point we wish to make is this, that a person may seem very conservative, and by this very attitude be very far removed from the viewpoint of the Church, as expressed through the mouth of those who have the best right to speak in her name.

We believe also that a great deal of the opposition to the Church comes from the fact that those who sometimes presume to speak in her name are often voicing opinions that are very far removed from her mind. In this way the Church is misunderstood and made responsible for a body of teaching which she in reality repudiates.

“A thoughtful consideration of the numerous attacks made by the accredited representatives of Socialism on religion and on the Catholic Church in particular will make it evident to every intelligent Catholic that these men have ideas of the principles and doctrines of the Church which are wholly mistaken and fundamentally wrong. Yet if we consider the unqualified and exaggerated statements made by some pastors of the faithful and the general rules of Christian conduct laid down by them, it would appear that these enemies of all religion are not wholly without justification for the false opinions they have conceived of the Church’s purposes.” (*Ecclesiastical Review*, Herbert Parker, S. J., Feb. 1923.)

It is the old story again. The greatest enemy of the Church at any time is the pious fool. The open enemies of the Church say indeed that “religion is the opium of the people,” “the moral policeman of capitalism,” “an enemy of liberty and civilization,” “a huge and ghastly parasite on the social body.” And the charges are often made in all sincerity and good faith. Thousands of workmen believe that the Church is the greatest social evil, an avowed enemy of the progress of the working classes.

“Let us question ourselves, are we doing all in our power to disabuse them of these false ideas? Are we endeavoring wisely to win over the workmen from their baneful influence by presenting to them the true gospel of Christ, by making it clear to them that the Church is and has ever been the workman’s best friend?” (Herbert Parker, S. J., *ibidem*.)

The effect of a too apologetic attitude has very baneful results in practice. “A few weaklings have gathered around the priests who have counseled submission and patience under oppression; the vast body of the Catholic faithful has stood aloof and indifferent, and a vigorous and energetic minority of enemies of all religion has ruled the country, in spite of the meetings of protest and

representations of the ill-guided flocks.” At the present day, “when the good of souls and the glory of God demand resistance to injustice, the fight is on between Hia followers and the forces of tyranny and evil. The Christian on Earth is in the Church militant; he should not too soon become a member of the Church suffering.” (Herbert Parker, S. J., *ibidem*.)

The opposite line of conduct is responsible for many a calumny that today keeps numbers of workers from believing that the teaching of the Church is truly opposed to all the forces that try to enslave them. “This is why their eyes are closed to all the efforts of the Church for the good of the laboring classes, to their deliverance through her exertions from the slavery of the Roman times, from the serfdom of the Middle Ages through her religious guilds, drawn to its relief in the industrial subjection of the present day by her wise legislation, and the leadership of her Chief Pastor, the workingman’s best friend, the immortal Leo XIII.” (*Ibidem*, Parker, S. J.)

Careful and Patient Study Called For

Before delivering oneself, therefore, in an official capacity as teacher of the doctrines of the Church, as they touch the moral and ethical problems of our present complex social and industrial system, it behooves us first to study carefully and patiently what these doctrines really are. In reality this is becoming daily an easier task than it had been some years ago. We have at our disposal now a big body of doctrine from the most reliable authors who are altogether very capable of interpreting the official teaching of the Church in social matters, as she has delivered it through the teaching of her Popes and her Bishops and Theologians during the last half century. In this way we shall avoid creating false impressions, and antagonizing those who should be our greatest friends, once they were aware of the true teaching of that great Church, which they have learned to suspect, because of those false impressions created by some who have no hesitation, in spite of evident limitations, in speaking in her name.

“These are the impressions which we must labor to undo; these are the charges which we must not allow to be made against the Church in the future. Our duty as pastors of souls is to preach the true gospel of Christ in the spirit in which it was given, not in a *pious distorted sense* of our own. Our duty is to show how, far from being a foe of the masses, a pillar of capitalism, the Church has down through the ages defended the laborer against oppression. We are to combat the evils of Socialism by the work of the social apostolate, by procuring social reform. While exercising a salutary and restraining influence on violent or illegal action, we should endeavor to acquire, when possible, a leading voice in the councils of labor unions, and always to encourage, aid and lead in the fight against the injustices of

wealth and power. Our duty is to help the laboring classes gain all their just demands for opportunities for self-development and progress in this world, which is the will of God as truly as their eternal happiness in the world to come.” (Parker, S. J., *ibidem*.)

There is more than intelligent understanding of these problems required in order to preach the Church’s doctrines of Justice and Right in America today. One requires more than average moral courage and detachment of spirit for the task. If there be any doubts on this point, we would refer the reader to an article by Dr. John A. Ryan in *The Catholic World* for April, 1923. The caption under which he writes, “Legalized Despotism in Virginia,” is a sufficient commentary on the attitude taken up towards freedom of speech on social and industrial questions, as interpreted not only by execrable vulgar and loudmouthed one hundred per cent Americans, but also by a new and yet more vulgar menace, the wealthy lay Catholic, who has resort to means as despicable as those Dr. Ryan relates in the article referred to, which describes the mean and sordid attempts made to prohibit the American Civil Liberties Union from exercising the right, guaranteed them by the constitution of the United States. “The writer acquired some important information through his connection with the preparations to hold the meeting of March 4th. He learned that certain *Catholic coal operators* tried without success to have the Right Reverend Bishop of Wheeling forbid him to address the meeting. He was warned by a *prominent Catholic* of Washington, at the instance of a *Catholic operator* in Logan county, that the party of speakers would be met in Logan by the civil authorities who would inform them that they could not hold this meeting. ‘On what ground?’ the writer asked. ‘On the ground that the meeting is liable to cause a riot.’ Of course, there was no such danger; nevertheless, the pretended danger of such an occurrence has more than once been employed by arbitrary officials to prevent meetings which they did not want to have held.” (*Catholic World*, April, 1923, John A. Ryan.)

Before the senate committee which investigated conditions in the mining regions of West Virginia late in 1921, a number of things were brought to light which would prove interesting reading for those who are inclined to think that the greatest enemies of American liberties are the ignorant foreign immigrants, miners and others like them, who do not readily and immediately fall in love with a system of government which they do not understand except as it is revealed in actual practice, by their contacts with such high and mighty representatives of law and order as Sheriff Don Chafin, who metes out civil liberty according to the constitution, safely interpreted by amendments and injunctions, and who commands the deputies of Logan county in the sovereign state of West Virginia. We have no doubt but that Sheriff Chafin was duly and violently patriotic during the late war that was fought to make the world safe for democracy, such as that

enjoyed under our flag and constitution by the peace-loving coal diggers of Logan County, West Virginia! This conviction is increased in our minds when we reflect that the man in command of the deputies, Sheriff Don Chafin, has held that office by the free suffrage of the citizens of his constituency continually since 1912, and admitted to the senate investigating committee that he was now worth \$350,000, consisting of stock in banks that do business with the mining corporations, one of whose representatives was this Catholic coal baron before mentioned, who in the exuberance of his piety and love for the fair fame of the Catholic Church approached without success the Right Reverend Bishop of Wheeling, to forbid a Catholic priest and professor of moral theology from addressing a meeting of mine workers, lest the sober statement of the teaching of Leo XIII on the right of collective bargaining might cause a riot. Where is the sword of Old Virginia? Virginia, the nurse of Thomas Jefferson and Sheriff Don Chafin!

“Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibit the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” (The Constitution of these United States, ordained and established by us, the people of the United States, in order to secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.) But what is the constitution between friends, especially when these friends be pious and patriotic Catholic coal barons, and that living embodiment of ordered liberty, Sheriff Don Chafin?

Article XIX

Contrasting Ideals

In the early Middle Ages every household was sufficient to itself. It was producer and consumer. There were no external manufacturers worth considering. The lord of the manor had a few luxuries from time to time. But the monastery or manor felled its own wood, built its own dwellings, spun the wool and made it into cloth. There were provisions made for grinding their own corn and baking their own bread. They had their flocks and herds on the common pastures. The life was very simple and very happy. The tenement houses of our great cities were unknown.

The serf had the open air to work in, instead of the foul factory rooms of our big manufacturing plants. He had plenty of bread and good meat and wine or ale or cider. Embalmed beef scandals were unknown until our big trusts got their monopolies. There was no envy in his heart for the nobility because the nobility were really noble in those days. When you think of nobility in the Middle Ages you must not confuse them with the vulgar, immoral and idle rich which pass for nobility in effete civilizations.

Neither were the nobility of these Catholic times completely separated from the serfs, as the rich nowadays are from the poor or working classes. Of course they did not talk so much of democracy in those times. People never talk much about what they really believe in. They simply practice it. We never make vehement speeches about our mother's virtue. A truthful man does not go around telling everybody that he never lies. He doesn't have to do it. You begin to suspect such an individual. We wonder what would happen if, in this Democratic Age and country, where liberty, equality and fraternity are as taken for granted as one's right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, a coal digger from Logan County, West Virginia, attempted to sit in a box at a grand opera performance, even though he paid for his ticket with good United States currency? For some reason or other there might be a riot which would call for the display of the flashing stars of the deputies of our patriotic friend of the last article.

A Common Unifying Religion

In Mediaeval times the people of all classes had a common religion and all worshipped together in their beautiful churches or more beautiful cathedrals. After a beautiful liturgical High Mass, games and dancing were held on the village green, the lord and his family joining in with the peasants. The same priest was the spiritual director of the serf and the lord. When the monks performed the office of lords of the manor, the conditions were more ideal still. The ambitious or greedy abbots were very few and mostly mythical. If a few existed in the flesh anywhere, it was the individual that was at fault, not the class to which he belonged.

The monks were loved by the people. They were especially the guardians of the poor, and their doors were ever open to the wanderer and the homeless. All the lies and insinuations that we find in our histories about the monks of the Middle Ages are due to the inveterate religious prejudices handed down as a bad heritage from the founders of the Reformation, especially in England. When Henry VIII and the other English kings and queens and so-called nobility stole by force and fraud the property of the monks and the Church, they were forced, as they always are, even down to this day, to do so in the name of some high moral principle, in the name of "humanity" and "democracy," and therefore the monks and the Church and the monasteries had to be maligned and calumniated in order that the pious Henry VIII and his virgin daughter, Queen Elizabeth, may have justification before the world.

Historical Research and Authority

Now that scholars such as Cardinal Gasquet, and even non-Catholics, more than one, have made learned researches into these spoliations of the English

monasteries and abbeys in the beginnings of the Reformation, there is no reason why these historic lies should be taught and believed any more as history, unless one is to adopt the concept of history of a certain English school of historians as his own, viz., that history is a conspiracy against truth. We must rather take the authority of such men as Damaschke. Writing of the economic conditions of the Middle Ages, he assures us, "that a degree of general social welfare and true popular happiness was reached under the feudal system which surpasses our very conception. Even at its worst, the feudal system was a vast progress over the best conditions of labor that had ever existed in the pagan world of classical antiquity" (Husslein, *Democratic Industry*, page 78).

Our own last century, smug and self satisfied as it was with itself, until it went to pieces over night, knew only boundless dissatisfaction, unhappiness, and misery that was altogether unknown to the Middle Ages. We are now going back to study these happy times to find models in these hitherto despised Middle Ages for the social, economic, and religious reconstruction of our own civilization, unless, indeed it be rotten beyond repair. Our social vision is gradually being clarified. The heights of development reached in the ages of faith and true learning, which some Anglo-Saxon and lying historians call Dark Ages, give us a true picture of Christian democracy in industry which they were able to realize in these Mediaeval times because they lived in the midst of Christendom, when society was saturated through and through with Christian Catholic ideals.

All your boasted progress, and culture, and democracy, and political liberty leave us cold. One ounce of honest moral indignation, one ounce of honest sincere truth and justice in our industrial and political practices is worth tons of this popular buncombe. We hear a good deal of the robber knights of Mediaeval times, who very likely did prey a little on their weak and unprotected neighbors, but everybody at that time knew and treated them for what they were, robber barons. But the man of prey in our day is not at all socially ostracized. In their own circles they are treated singly as fairly decent men, though in the collective capacity of a great corporation, or individually as captains of industry, they may be guilty of the sharpest practices and most unfair dealing. *The New York American* is authority for the crowning infamy of the coal barons, and it has printed an affidavit by Charles Moran, civil and mining engineer of Shamokin, Pa., to this effect:

"One company has dug up and shipped as coal, either mixed with fresh mined coal or unmixed, a culm dump of 3,200,000 tons, and is disposing of another containing 750,000 tons. A second company so nicely disposed of 682,500 tons of culm and is still carrying on that it attacked another of 4,625,000 tons and has disposed of one-quarter of it at market prices for genuine coal. A third company, the Philadelphia and Reading, got rid of 682,500 tons of culm and is still carrying

on. Fifty other companies are working up the same fraud and shipping refuse to the market as genuine coal.”

A Senator's Denunciations

It is such practices that drew this scathing invective from Senator Copeland before even he knew of this last crowning infamy: “The chief offenders are the Lehigh Valley, the Lackawanna, the Delaware and Hudson, the New Jersey Central and the Pennsylvania. None of them is giving the people a square deal. There appears to be an understanding between railroad officials and mining operatives so that as little coal as possible shall be mined and then be transported at pleasure. There is plenty of coal, plenty of mines, plenty of cars . . . If the death rate of New York and other cities continues, the responsibility must rest on the companies and the operators. It is time for the people to get the unvarnished truth.”

We all remember during the 1922 coal strike what attempts were made to make the unions appear responsible for the inconveniences that must consequently be suffered by the unoffending public. The poor, unoffending, long suffering public! “And representatives of labor unions are restrained by court injunctions, in at least three counties of southern West Virginia, not only from organizing the miners, but also from public discussions which might be construed as attempts to solicit the mine workers to join a labor union . . . A distinction may, with advantage, be drawn between two kinds of interference with individual liberty in Logan and three or four other counties of West Virginia. The first consists of restrictions placed upon the general liberties of the citizen by economic pressure and administrative usurpation. It is comprehensively indicated in the assertion frequently made that the coal operators own and control everything in those counties, that the majority of the inhabitants cannot exercise in their everyday affairs and relations that freedom which obtains elsewhere in the United States. . . . To whatever extent this restriction upon freedom prevails, it is due to one general and one special factor. The general factor is found in the practically complete ownership by the mining companies of the towns and settlements in which the mining populations live. The houses, stores, theaters, schools and churches are located upon land owned by the mining companies. In many settlements, the only doctor is on the salary roll of the company, and there are no stores except those operated by the company. Frequently the clergy receives a substantial part of their salaries from the corporations.

Points of the Investigation

Before the Senate Committee which investigated conditions in the mining regions of West Virginia, late in 1921, Mr. Coolidge, a leading coal operator of Logan County, admitted that the operators would not continue to pay the salary of “a minister who so misused the cloak of religion, as to denounce the abuse of power by certain public officials in that county” (*Catholic World*, April, 1923, “Legal Despotism,” by John A. Ryan). And we take such pride in living in this land of the square deal! And when one adds the special factors which account for the interference with general civil liberties of citizens as set forth in detail during the Senate Committee investigation already referred to, one is inclined to wonder why societies and clubs are not formed who would try to Americanize these coal barons and others of that ilk.

For example, “Mr. Thurmond, a coal operator, Mr. England, the attorney general of West Virginia, and Mr. Chaffin, the sheriff of Logan County, all testified that the deputy sheriffs of that county received their salaries through the sheriff from the coal operators. According to Mr. Thurmond, the companies expended for this purpose in the year 1921, \$46,630, and in the first nine months of 1922, \$61,517. The men paid out of this fund were not private employees of the companies, but regular deputy sheriffs, servants of Logan County. It may well be doubted whether such men could administer their office impartially as between the coal companies, from which they received their salaries, and the employees of the coal companies.” (*Catholic World*, *ibidem*.)

Accounting for the Facts

There is a reason of course that explains these facts. It is that original sin has the effect of darkening our understanding, weakening our will and leaving in us a strong inclination to evil. “Heavy laborious work,” says Heinrich von Langenstein, the Mediaeval economist, “is the inevitable yoke of punishment which according to God’s righteous verdict has been laid on all the sons of Adam.” “But many of Adam’s descendants seek in all sorts of cunning ways to escape from this yoke, and live in idleness without labor, and at the same time to have a superfluity of useful and necessary things; some by robbery and plunder, some by usurious dealings, others by lying, deceit, and the countless forms of dishonest and fraudulent gain by which men are for ever seeking to get riches and abundance without toil” (Janssen, *History of the German People at the Close of the Middle Ages*).

In every society at all times a minority of men have always been, and probably always will be, actuated by such anti-social motives that strong government at all

times is necessary to restrain their native tendency to social injustices. They bring to naught the dreams of all kinds of social idealists the moment they try to give practical effect to their theories. As it was understood in the Middle Ages, the function of government was to give protection to the community by keeping this type of man – the man of prey – in strict subjection. The control of the Mediaeval Guild would make practices like those described above impossible. It seems at present there is no power that is willing to control such practices. This is not a desirable situation from the viewpoint either of industrial peace and good feeling or of respect for the law. No matter how the individuals may appear in their private capacities as father, friend, or neighbor, there are evident menaces in allowing a free hand to the same men acting in some impersonal artificial way, as part of a soulless corporation, huge even as the government of the nation itself, held together by a vast international credit system wielding no one knows what autocratic control over the lives of the citizens and the nation.

Article XX

Religion Must Be Restored

Dr. Ralph Adams Cram, in his book *Towards the Great Peace*, has a beautiful chapter on organic religion. Without its restoration, of course there can be no peace. “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” There is only one faith that can please God. There is no other just as good. “The world demands now not denial but affirmation, not protest and division but the ringing ‘Credo’ of Catholic unity.”

Hilaire Belloc, whom Cardinal O’Connell introduced to his Boston audience as “the greatest lay Catholic mind,” made this the burden of his last American lectures. Our civilization, he says, is in great peril, a peril accelerated but not created by the war. Its ruin may be imminent. Yet Europe in the past has survived greater dangers. She triumphed over the Asiatic invasion of Islam. She survived the break-up of the Roman organization.

Civilization is facing a threefold menace: (1) the general revolt against government; (2) the war between capital and labor; (3) the conflict of faith and moral ideals. These three are in reality one. The first two are a direct consequence of the third. How can you expect to have respect for authority and the sacredness of governments, or how can there be an understanding between capital and labor, as long as there is going on in the same society a conflict of faith and moral ideal? Parliaments used to be the friends of the people. Is not the mother of parliaments, even to this day, called the House of Commons? Yet, parliaments now are infinitely more hated than dynasties in other times. Even the markedly conservative audiences of Belloc gave the stamp of their approval to his statement

that the capitalist system, which was sick before the war, is now dying. In England the expedient of doles proves that the mainspring of capitalism is gone. Europe can be saved, though; but only if she achieves spiritual unity, and under the faith. That will save civilization, and nothing else.

Christianity an Operative Force

For 2,000 years Christianity has been an operative force in the world. For about 500 years Catholicism was the religion of Europe. During that 500 years of Christendom, the unity of the Church had been the constant image without which Christendom could not be. Yet there was a time when even Gregory VII, when he was only the Sub-Deacon Hildebrand, had almost despaired of saving Europe. The obstacles seemed insurmountable, the chief of which was inertia. And St. Gregory died, he thought, a failure, like most all saints. And yet mediaeval Europe was the monument of his great triumph. Perhaps the last words from his dying lips were the cause of his success: "I have loved justice and hated iniquity, therefore I die in exile."

When Gregory died Europe awoke. "All architecture is transformed, and that quite new thing, the Gothic, arises. The conception of representative assembly, monastic in origin, fruitfully transferred to civilian soil, appears in the institutions of Christendom. The vernacular languages appear, and with them the beginnings of our literature: the Tuscan, the Castilian, the Langue d'Oc, the Northern French, somewhat later the English.

"Even the primitive tongues that had always kept their vitality from beyond recorded time, the Celtic and the German, begin to take on new creative powers and to produce a new literature. That fundamental institution of Europe, the university, arises: first in Italy, immediately afterwards in Paris – which last becomes the type and the center of the scheme.

"The central civil governments begin to correspond to their natural limits, the English monarchy is fixed first, the French kingdom is coalescing, the Spanish regions will soon combine. The Middle Ages are bom.

The Thirteenth Century

"The flower of that capital experiment in the history of our race was the 13th century. Edward I of England, St. Louis of France, Pope Innocent III, were the types of its governing manhood. Europe was renewed; there were new white walls around the cities, new white Gothic churches in the towns, new castles on the hills, law codified, the classics re-discovered, the questions of philosophy sprung to activity and producing in their first vigor, as it were, the summit of expository

power in St. Thomas, surely the strongest, the most virile intellect which our European blood has given to the world.

“Two notes mark the time for anyone who is acquainted with its building, its letters, and its wars: a note of youth, and a note of content. Europe was imagined to be at last achieved, and that ineradicable dream of a permanent and satisfactory society seemed to have taken on flesh and to have come to live forever among Christian men.” (Hilaire Belloc, *Europe and the Faith*, pp. 200-201.)

In the history of mankind there is no more instructive time than those Middle Ages. They were the *aurea aetas*, the golden age, of civilization, which owes its preservation and glorious resurrection to no inherent power and fascination of its own, but in spite of the assaults of rude and fierce barbarian conquerors, to the influence and authority of the Catholic Church.

There is not a state in Europe – and all of them have a mediaeval root – that has not as its founder a Catholic bishop, who baptized its original conqueror, bowed down before the Cross of Christ and the crozier of Christ’s representative.

The Basis of Christian Society

They were the premiers of the barbarian Catholic kings, the codifiers of their laws, their friends and their counsellors. Think of Clovis and Remigius, Theodoric and Epiphanius, the Burgundian king before Avitus. The very basis of Christian society, the foundation of mediaeval Christendom, were laid by a long, illustrious line of saintly, brave and prophetic priests and bishops, who had the blessed vision vouchsafed to them, since the days of St. Augustine, that these rough barbarian children would be the future children of the Church and vigorous apostles of Christianity.

The greatest friend of an old order that is going inevitably out is the truest friend of the new one that is being as inevitably ushered in. It is the capacity for absorbing the shock of change that avoids the unspeakable horrors that must result from a blind clinging to a pagan civilization that has reached its term. Thus it was with the Roman civilization that preceded the Middle Ages. It was its own abuses, not the strong right hand of the barbarian, that brought it beaten down.

Economically, the old Roman Empire refused to become Christian even in the hands of Christian rulers, just as today pagan ethics seem the rule of life in industrial things. “It was an omnipotent, omniscient bureaucracy, that learned nothing and forgot nothing, until one grim day the Cross went down before the Crescent on the dome of St. Sophia, and the Leather Apron was hoisted above the waters of the Golden Horn.”

The Civilization of Europe

The civilization of Europe sprung from the soil as mysteriously as man himself. Feudalism was a child of nature. Therefore during all the trials of those ages every bishop's house was the court of appeal for the over-burdened peasant who sought justice from the tyranny of some despotic lord or some cunning middleman. The bishop was the judge. He was the spokesman of the common people in the country as well as in the city. The letters of Pope Gregory the Great in the sixth century read like the magnificent encyclical of Leo XIII in the 19th. Gregory could rebuke an emperor about false measurements and exactions with the same moral intrepidity with which Leo denounced "like injustices still practiced by covetous and grasping men."

The ancient bishops caused the homes of religion to arise from the soil of Europe, and around these towers and spires and crosses of abbeys and churches and cathedrals, there grew up 10,000 hamlets beneath their beneficent shadow. It was under these crosses that the bishops yearly in synod assembled the parish priests and taught them how to comment on the gospel teaching of Christ, and to preach the moral doctrines of the Church without fear or cringing before the most powerful feudal lord as before the humblest peasant.

The Papacy

Behind the priest and bishop arose the awe-inspiring institution of the Papacy, the Church of Christ itself incarnate in the visible presence of the Pope, the supreme bishop of Rome. The bishop was the court of last resort, a mitred gospel walking among the sons of men. Crozier in hand, he sat in the great doorway of his cathedral in the most commanding site in the city judging justly, regularly and without price. His priests stood around him, the advocates and notaries of his people.

To him came the pilgrim on his weary way to the shrine of some great saint, the stranger from afar, and the penitent seeking absolution. Ambassadors would not dare to pass him by without a visit. The king put up at his house on his annual round. The great nobles were his guests, for he had taken an oath to be the dispenser of bounteous hospitality. It was not for nothing that the Catholic Episcopate won its incredible authority over the minds and hearts of its faithful people. See him on the throne of his magnificent Gothic cathedral on one of the great feast days, his clergymen crowding around him from the villages and villas and castles, his miter on his head and staff in hand, a sign to the assembled throng that no wrong would be left unredressed, a symbol of the sun of justice shining on the sons of men.

Monasticism

The monks of St. Benedict were everywhere, too. His heavenly inspired rule inculcated labor in the field. They made beautiful homes amid the deserts and waste places of Europe. The priest and the lay brother, the teacher and the common laborer, walked out into the fields together and prayed and worked all day long, side by side, in silence and contemplation. They handed down the fine traditions of old Roman agriculture. They created the soil that they afterward rented to the peasant for an almost nominal rent.

It was an old saying in these beautiful, idyllic Middle Ages that it was a good thing to dwell beneath the crozier. The bishop and the abbot had the greenest fields and the richest harvests, the best vineyards, and forests and fisheries. Where there was much religion there was no waste and no riotous living. Everywhere there was security and holy peace. The classical studies had humanized bishop and priest, abbot and monk. The gospel was lived in the daily lives of countless holy men and women. There was daily service of God at a thousand majestic altars in gorgeous basilicas, beautiful Romanesque churches, and magnificent Gothic cathedrals, and the divine office, the *opus Dei* par excellence, was sung in beautiful Gregorian chant seven times every day in the artistically carved choirs of a thousand abbeys.

Will this blessed vision of peace ever appear on this Earth again? Yes, when religion is restored to its rightful place in the heart of society and the individual; when the world is become Catholic again, and God shall be worshipped daily through the liturgy of His Church, with the same zeal that men now worship at the shrines of Mammon, the god and prince of this modern pagan world. If we seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, all these other good things will be added unto us, because He Himself has said it.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCH AND THE GUILDS OF THE
MIDDLE AGES

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY

Article XXI

What Were the Guilds of the Middle Ages?

The historical conspectus of the development of industrial democracy would not be complete without a word about the Guild System of the Middle Ages. The word “guild” – from the Carolingian Latin *geldonia* – occurs for the first time in the year 779. It is found in a law issued by Charlemagne. “We have been speaking heretofore of the unfree or partially freed laborer. But side by side with these laboring classes were the freemen who were leagued together more than a thousand years ago in the peace guilds of Europe.

As we have seen, there was no highly centralized authority in these days to preserve law and order. The people ruled themselves because they were real democrats. In our own days notice the tendency to have the government do everything for the citizen. Even the Catholic virtue of temperance, or that more heroic virtue of fortitude expressed by total abstinence, must be now vicariously enjoined by constitutional amendment enforcing upon Christians what was formerly considered a fanaticism peculiar to Manichean and Islamic prohibitionists. This is always the tendency of slaves preparing and being prepared for the Servile State.

The guilds therefore had their origin in the clubbing together of the people to enforce law and order among themselves voluntarily. They did this in the interests of self-protection. These original associations were called “Frith” or peace “Guilds.” Still they were not purely voluntary organizations, because their power was legally delegated. Their actions therefore never partook of the nature of lynch law, where justice is taken summarily into the hands of the mob without any legal

sanction. This mob law or lawlessness, by the way, is another peculiar excrescence of our modern democracy which is popularly supposed to rest on the secure foundation of individual respect for the majesty of law enthroned on holy pedestal.

The freemen were divided into groups of ten, known as tithings. Ten of these groups in turn formed a hundred, and so on. Statutes regulating them were made by the law of the land, both ecclesiastical and civil. The problems of labor did not enter into their duties at first, but afterwards they developed in that direction, and became very important from the civic and economic points of view. The members of the guild were as closely joined together as the family. Kemble tells us that, "if a crime were committed, the guild were to hold the criminal to his answer; to clear him if they could conscientiously do so, by making oath in his favor, to aid him in paying his fine if found guilty. If, flying from justice, he admitted his crime, they were to purge themselves on oath from all guilty knowledge of the act, and all participation in his flight, failing which, they were themselves to suffer mulct in proportion to his offense. On the other hand, they were to receive at least a portion of the compensation for his death, or of such other sums as passed from hand to hand during the process of an Anglo-Saxon suit."

Guilds Preserved Peace

Thus they preserved the public peace, the life, honor and property of individuals. At a time when the government could not do so, they brought the guilty to justice and gave defenders to the injured and the innocent. After a while these guilds developed into institutions of great economic as well as legal importance. They were at once legislative bodies and police departments without the slightest taint or suspicion of graft. They developed into insurance companies, mutual benefit associations, purgatorial societies, and even courts of justice. In the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries religion, charity and brotherhood were already strong and dominant principles in the legal statutes of the guilds.

Should one of the guild die, each of the members gave a loaf of bread to a poor man for the repose of his soul, and pledged himself to sing fifty psalms that the soul of his dead brother might rest in eternal peace. This custom is preserved to the present day in some of the great religious orders of the Church. The psalms are recited by his brethren, and his place at the common table is laid as usual for thirty days after his death, and his measure of food and wine is then distributed, and that a good deal over and above the ordinary fare, in the poor lodge, for the repose of the soul of the departed one. The guild helped the poor, the afflicted and the pilgrim to accomplish their aims. Masses were also offered at its expense for the living and the dead.

The charity of the Catholic spirit re-baptized any pagan harshness that may have been found in the earlier guilds, because there were guilds away back in pagan times also, and the genius of Catholicity is never to destroy or root up what is good in itself, but to sanctify and bless it, and make it subserve a higher and holier god.

Action of Early Councils Explained

If, then, Charlemagne and some early councils of the local churches tried to suppress some of the practices of these guilds, it must always be understood that it was done to stop abuses that might have crept in from pagan sources, either in the origin of the guilds themselves, or in influences from outside, because pagan institutions of a like nature at first often existed simultaneously with the Christian guilds.

The Church, then as now, was the champion of all reasonable freedom of organization. For that principle, even in the twentieth century, her sovereign pontiff, Pius X, tore up a concordat and handed his passports to the French ambassador with the usual historic unflinching *non possumus*. As Unwin tells us in his account of the London Guilds: "The co-operation, official or unofficial, of the clergy was an almost indispensable element of any proper organization." It was from these beginnings, then, that later on there arose, with all the other fine flowering of Catholic things, the real guilds, the now famous and historic trade and labor unions of that honest, manly, good and happy time, the Middle Ages.

In the time of Charlemagne (eighth century), many of the mediaeval trades already existed, but the tradesmen, if not slaves, were of semi-servile condition. They were organized by the lord of the manor. He was also the organizer of the serfs or unfree laborers which took in small dealers, mechanics, and professional artists. The servants, hunters and shepherds were also organized into separate groups. Each group had a master of its own having authority to exercise judgment and conviction and sentence, when the fault was not of a nature to demand a higher official. The lord of the manor was the supreme tribunal under the law of the land itself which was the court of last and final appeal.

Church Elevates Laborers

These organizations could not be spoken of as guilds in the proper sense of that term. Their members dwelt near the manor, if not in it. Sometimes they stayed at the manor while they were working for the lord, and then went home to work for themselves. We read that Charlemagne was well supplied in all his manors with skilled craftsmen and expert artists – "workers in gold and silver, blacksmiths, shoemakers, turners, wagonmakers, carpenters, armorers, lacemakers, soapboilers,

bakers, and last but not least, brewers.” These craftsmen according to the best authorities could sell their wares or their labor when they were not employed by the lord of the manor, and when they worked for the monastery, which sometimes took the place of the lord of the manor, they received their meals and again returned to their homes. Here again the Church had made immeasurable progress in elevating the position of the artisan from what it had been in the days of classic paganism in Greece or Rome.

The toilers even in these remote days had a surer subsistence, a quieter life, and were altogether more contented than they have ever been under modern capitalism. Pauperism and starvation were unknown. The humblest worker, as well as his family, was always provided for, if not from the returns of his labor, at least out of the supplies of the monastery. Canon law bound the clergy to give all that remained over and above their own proper and becoming sustenance to the poor and needy. That is more than can be said of their successors, the Anglican Church and Protestant landlords, and the royal and kindred plunderers of their own and future generations, who stole the lawful property of the Church and the monasteries, and laid in revolt with these sacrilegiously stolen goods the tainted foundations of our modern economic system, industrial capitalism, which was conceived in iniquity and in sin did its authors conceive it, with all their other illegitimate and bastard offspring, which every ignorant generation ever since has joined in extolling, as the blessings of the Protestant Reformation. It was a great English premier who recalled these slimy beginnings of Anglo-Saxon empire when he told the House of Commons that these noble lords, opposing Welsh disestablishment, were the lineal descendants of no Aaronic high-priests anointed with the oil of gladness, but men whose hands, like those of their ancestors, were dripping with the fat of sacrilege. It would seem that Lenin has read only with too much profit these bad beginnings of modern Anglo-Saxon civilization. But the same old Church gives its priestly martyrs today to the firing squads of Moscow in defense of its rights against immoral usurpers which soaked with its bloody protest in other days the scaffolds of Tyburn Hill and the noisome dungeons of the Tower of Julius, London’s and England’s lasting shame.

You can turn the searchlight of history as unsparingly as you like on the seamy side of mediaeval institutions, economic or religious, but it will stand up under the most searching scrutiny infinitely the superior of the age of so-called progress and enlightenment, which has unfortunately replaced it for now four hundred years. There is no peril in our modern civilization which was not seen and combated in the Middle Ages by the chosen instrument of the guild system. If modern historical scholarship set out to attack the piety and intelligence of mediaevalism it has largely succeeded in establishing both.

Article XXII

The Merchant Guilds

At the time of the Norman conquest of England (1066) there were about eighty towns in the country. We should consider them only large villages at the present day. Some of them were far in advance of the others, both in size and importance; e. g., London, Winchester, Bristol, Norwich, York and Lincoln. The largest of these had perhaps a population of about seven or eight thousand. The total town population was scarcely more than one hundred and fifty thousand. Towns like these were the centers of whatever trade there was.

At first the towns were subject to the lords who gave the protection which they paid for in tolls. As soon as the Norman rule was firmly established, there was peace and order such as England never enjoyed before, and in town after town there arose the merchant guild or hanse. It was originally a society formed for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining the privilege of carrying on trade. This meant a monopoly of trade in each town by the guild brethren as against the other inhabitants, as well as liberty to trade in other towns. Non-members could buy and sell victuals, but they could not engage in further trading without paying tolls from which the guild members were free.

If there was a trader whose business was prosperous enough to warrant his being able to pay the entrance fee in order to become a member of the guild, and he failed to do so, he was coerced into doing so by repeated fines. Each member paid an entrance fee and very probably other dues to the guild chest. Expenses for common purposes were defrayed from the common chest.

No Society Without Jurisdiction

The Middle Ages could not conceive of a society that did not claim some kind of a jurisdiction over its members. Therefore the guild merchant in its meetings, called "morning speeches," drew up a code of statutes for the regulation of trade, and punished breaches of commercial morality by whoever committed. Very possibly the merchant guilds existed sometimes side by side with the religious and frith guilds already described. The first positive mention of a merchant guild is not earlier than 1093.

During the reign of Henry I (1100 to 1135) began the granting of charters to the towns by the king or lords. Of course in all these charters the merchants occupied a prominent place. Glanville, a prominent lawyer of the time of Henry II (1154 to 1189) does not distinguish the commune or body of citizens endowed with the rights of self-government from the merchant guild of the town. Guilds existed often before a charter was granted. Still, the charter was highly valued because of

the coercive powers given the society, as well as the rights and privileges secured to its members in their dealing with other towns. Of the hundred and sixty towns represented in the parliaments of Edward I, it can be definitely proved that ninety-two possessed charters. It may be concluded that several others also had like privileges.

Merchant Guilds

Merchant guilds all over England had much the same kind of organization. Each was presided over by an alderman, with two or four assistants, called wardens. There was an inner council of twelve or twenty-four. The duties of the aldermen and wardens were to summon and preside over meetings and festivities, to manage the funds of the society and take care of the estate, if the guild had purchased or otherwise acquired land.

The membership did not at first exclude craftsmen as such. Besides the merchant or trader, his eldest son or heir had a right to free admission. The younger sons had to pay a smaller entrance fee. The membership could be given away, sold or transmitted. This privilege was extended to neighboring monasteries and lords of manors. All the guild members were not great merchants. In nearly all the towns agriculture was still the main occupation, and farmers found it convenient to be guild members in order to dispose of their surplus products. The sales for the most part consisted in raw products of agriculture, such as skins, wool and corn.

Promoting the Common Good

The regulations and jurisdictions exercised by the guild illustrates a characteristic common to all guilds of that and subsequent date. Each individual member was free to pursue his own interests as he thought best, but the trade or industry was considered the common interest of the whole body, therefore each had to submit to restrictions and to come to the assistance of his fellow members in order better to promote the common good. Thus the merchants of Liecestershire were compelled to display their wares (cloth, etc.) within the "Range" at Boston, under penalty of being fined a tun of ale. In this way they exercised supervision over those who came from outside and prevented fraudulent dealing from ruining the good fame and credit of the craftsmanship of the guilds of Boston.

One of the chief purposes of the guild was to maintain the privileges of the society. We find ordinances against acting as agents for non-members, and punishments for aiding and abetting a strange merchant in purchasing to the injury of the guild. Of equal importance was the maintenance of fair dealing and a high standard of quality in the goods sold by the guild.

There are numerous records of fines for corrupt practices such as dishonest dyeing of wool, mixing good and bad products together, short weights, selling above or below the just price. Unlike a modern company, aiming only at material returns and advantages, the guild idea entered into several departments of everyday life. Sick guildsmen were visited, wine and food was sent them from the guild banquets, the poor were relieved, and their daughters dowered whether they entered into matrimony or the convent; and when a member died his funeral expenses were attended to by the guild.

The Christian Ideal Governed

These merchant guilds began their existence about the second half of the eleventh century. During the twelfth century they flourished in every considerable English town. Free guilds began to spring up everywhere. Each had its own chaplain, its own altar and chapel, made its own offerings for the support of the Church and masses and benefactions to the poor. The Christian ideal governed everything. The essence of the guild idea was brotherhood, religion, mutual helpfulness and social fellowship among equals. The Catholic Church preached this equality and stood by to see that it was put into practice. It directed the infant attempts to execute its own great ideals. It led all society upward to a greater freedom and a more perfect charity. It was no easy fight. The Church had to overcome the opposition of powerful princes and states in securing her ends.

“Outside the Church violence and barbarity, sword and conquest, the untamed powers of nature reigned unchecked, both before the time of Pepin and Charlemagne, and after them under their more feeble successors, and indeed long after the complete extinction of their race.

“In spite of the contempt for learning and culture, there existed still a deep reverence for religion and its ministers; in spite of strong passions, faith was living. Monasteries were held in high honor as abodes of purer life, and persons high in rank took pleasure in visiting them, and frequently chose them as places of retreat for the remainder of their lives. Discipline and sound principles could come from the Church alone; enlightened legislation could be her work alone; and under her influence alone could the conditions of society be improved. To her was due the mitigation and repression of slavery, the first organized care of the poor, the institution of the Truce of God, the establishment of places of education, and every true form of progress.

The Position of the Clergy

“Princes and people were eager to confide the weightiest interests to the clergy and to increase their external means of power and influence; for their learning and virtue they merited trust, and by their character and authority they were the most sure support of public order. The Church on her side did her utmost to obtain safeguards against the many attacks and acts of aggression of princes and nobles, who sometimes from desire for vengeance, often from mere covetousness, imprisoned bishops and priests, robbed them, misused them, and thrust others into their places.” (Dr. Joseph Hergenrother, *Catholic Church and Christian State*, I, pp. 256-257.)

And Emerson, describing that mediaeval Christianity, writes: “The power of religious sentiment (like a chemistry of fire) put an end to human sacrifice, checked appetite, inspired the Crusades, inspired resistance to tyrants, inspired self-respect, set bounds to serfdom and slavery, founded liberty, created the religious architecture: York, Newstead, Westminster, etc. – works to which the key is lost with the sentiment which created them.”

Fixed Just Prices

The merchant guilds made monopoly as we know it today impossible. The guild fixed a just price for purchaser and tradesman alike. Profits and wages were kept within just limits so that the consumer was never menaced by an exorbitantly high cost of living. No individual or small group could monopolize any product. If anybody was detected making too large a purchase or sale than was possible to others, the goods purchased were instantly confiscated. There was room left for genius in these days, not by accumulating vast fortunes, but by producing the most perfect article for the use of the people. There was an honest income for all, but dishonest monopoly was allowed to none. Certain historians condemn the guilds for insisting on this point of restraining individualism. Yes, these regulations were irksome and galling to men who wanted to prey on the necessity of their fellow men, but it is only the morally spineless flunkey and lackey of capitalism as we know it who would be so ethically perverse as to call such individualism a virtue.

Article XXIII

The Craft Guilds of the Middle Ages

The next great step towards an ideal democracy was the craft guilds or Christian trade unions of mediaevalism. Their aim was to promote the interests of specialized craftsmen. They also worked for the industrial and commercial

interests of the city as well as their own special fraternity. Their inspiration again was the spirit of brotherhood. After the barbarian succeeded the Roman empire, agriculture was at first the universal employment. Specialized craftsmen were not needed while each family was sufficient for itself. The monasteries were bigger units and they were also the first trade schools. They had taught the barbarian how to cultivate the soil and to raise flocks and herds. They taught him also the rudiments of trades, and lastly, how to read and cipher.

When civilization grew more complex, free craftsmen united with other freemen in the peace guilds to enforce order and prevent theft and crime. The merchant guilds arose from these seeds. As we have seen, in the merchant guilds the members were craftsmen and merchants all at once. In the earlier stages there were no specialized guilds of craftsmen or artisans. But as the centers of population expanded, economic conditions became more complex. The villeins were becoming freemen and the ranks of the guildsmen were thus increasing. The merchant guilds were becoming too large, and so skilled and specialist craftsmen were now ready to form guilds of their own.

They spread rapidly throughout all of Christendom. This new organization of labor took place in the early part of the twelfth century. The relations of the merchant and craft guilds were not always very amicable. In some of the continental countries, desperate struggles took place between them, especially during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The principal reason for this seems to have been the fact that the merchant guilds monopolized municipal government as a sort of burgher oligarchy. As soon as the craftsmen became organized in their own craft guilds, a natural consequence was that they fought for a rightful share in the government of the town. The merchant guilds also tended to become too exclusive, as happened afterwards to the craft guilds themselves.

Guilds and Government

Two issues were raised as the power of the craftsmen developed. The merchant guild had become identical with the town government body. It also possessed a monopoly of the rights of trade and commerce. The craftsmen now sought immunity from supervision and demanded that this jurisdiction be vested in the craft guild over its own members. Neither were they to continue to submit to any trading monopoly claimed by prescription and custom as well as charter by the merchant guilds.

It was just as if the chamber of commerce would take over the civil and economic management of our present American cities, partly because they had the power, and partly because the government of the time allowed them by law to do so, and then the labor party would take it into their heads that it was bad for

laborers and the public generally to leave a monopoly of power, civil and economic, in the hands of this burgher oligarchy. When labor unions try to do this most reasonable thing today, we see conservative Catholics turning up the whites of their pious eyes and crying radicalism, socialism and every other foul epithet, to stigmatize properly such impertinent presumption on the part of the proletariat, notwithstanding the fact that we are all one hundred per cent Americans, and believe, of course, in every word of the Declaration of Independence, which embodies that most Catholic doctrine taken from the writings of the great Jesuit theologian, Cardinal Bellarmine, *viz.*: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just power from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing the powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.”

These old mediaevalist laborers were very wise. They did not shoot off reams of clap-trap about liberty and equality on the fourth of the hottest month in the year. They did not leave the finest passage of the Gettysburg speech to be a peroration only for patriotic congressmen on the eve of elections, or a drug for each as are already weakened in their civic purity by the fumes of saloon cigars and the alcoholic odors of soft drink parlors. They simply went and did what Catholic theology taught them, because like Lincoln, they believed that only by deeds and not words, can any nation, under God, have a new birth of freedom – and that otherwise government of the people, by the people, and for the people, shall perish from the Earth.

Noble manifestations of suppressed Catholicism, how you should be welcomed and cherished by every intelligent Catholic, because it was under the fostering care of our great historic and only divine Church that the labor unions of the Middle Ages, the craft guilds of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, became the most perfect form of industrial democracy ever known before or since.

First Craft Guilds

The first craft guilds were those of the weavers and fullers of woolen cloth. They were the first also to lead in the struggle against the governing machines in the towns all over western Europe. Guilds of bakers began to appear almost as early, but they never became as numerous and powerful as the weavers. From the Pipe Roll for the year 1130 we gather that in that year guilds of weavers existed in

London, Lincoln, and Oxford, which made annual payments to the king for his authorization of their existence.

In the early years of Henry II, guilds of weavers were also found in York, Winchester, Huntingdon, and Nottingham, each making annual payments to the exchequer. This annual payment was the condition on which they received the sanction of the government. Any guild not thus sanctioned was called “adulterine.” No attempt was made to dissolve the latter societies. They were never important enough to arouse the jealousy of the other craft guilds chartered by the king or government.

Charter Powers

Each charter contained, besides a general confirmation of “liberties and customs,” a clause forbidding anyone within the town or district from following the craft unless he belonged to the guild. The government recognized the right to force all craftsmen to become members of the guild, as well as to exercise supervision over those who joined. The early guilds, because of this antagonism to the burgesses, sought to make their jurisdiction as wide as possible. We have historically authentic records proving that the American plan of the open shop is as old as the reign of King John Lackland (1199-1216), a great tyrant, by the way, who was brought to his knees by the bishops and monks and barons of his day.

This was the king who was forced to sign the bill of rights known as Magna Charta, the first great charter of English liberty, drawn up and presented to King John by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, during the reign of the greatest of the mediaeval popes, Innocent III. The Magna Charta was reissued in slightly amended form during the reign of the next monarch, Henry III (1216-1227), with the approval of the Church of the first quarter of the thirteenth, the greatest and most dramatic of centuries.

This American plan of open shop, or Garyism, showed its unclean head first in London in the year 1191. In that year the citizens of London, by the recognition of its *commune*, obtained complete municipal self-government and as a consequence the same rights over trade and industry as the guild merchants possessed in other towns of this period. Immediately they began lobbying and offered to make an annual payment to the exchequer if the weavers’ guild were abolished. King John, on the advice, we suppose, of front porch best minds of that day, accepted the offer and in the year 1200 the guild was abolished by royal charter.

Collective Bargaining and the Closed Shop

But there must have been a lot of foreign radicals around who were not yet Anglicised sufficiently to appreciate the blessings of this kind of liberty, for after two or three years the labor union was again restored, and the craft guild of London weavers won the right to that most Catholic and mediaeval institution of collective bargaining through its most efficient weapon, the closed shop. So far the craft guild of London weavers. After all, perhaps the trouble with America today is that it is not Anglo-Saxon enough!

The craft guilds had to fight for their rights more or less against the municipal authorities in England until the reign of Edward I (1272-1307). Edward saw an ally in the guilds against the power of the governing bodies of the towns. Authority was becoming more centralized and while the guilds were obtaining fewer chartered and less extensive rights of jurisdiction, the guild system was no longer merely tolerated but fostered by the central government. About this period a rapid increase in the number of artisans took place. New wants began to be felt, and each new want was supplied by a new craft guild.

Internal Organizations

The most important part of the internal organization of the guild was the authority of the warders, overseers, bailiffs or masters, whose duties consisted in supervising the industry and punishing offenders. These officers were elected annually at full assemblies of the craftsmen. Absence from these elections was punished by fine. Laws were made annually at this full assembly and regulations drawn up to be submitted for the approval of the mayor and aldermen of the town. No one was allowed to work at the craft who was not first approved and admitted by the guild officials.

In the early part of the fourteenth century apprenticeship was becoming necessary before a craftsman could set up business as a master workman. The term of apprenticeship was fixed at seven years. Just then also a separate class of journeymen was coming into existence. Journeymen were those who had finished the term of apprenticeship and had not yet gone into business for themselves.

Certain regulations were drawn up by the different crafts aimed at the prevention of fraud and the maintenance of certain standards of size and quality in the wares produced. If an article was found not up to these standards it was stamped false work. Its makers were punished by fines and for a third or fourth offense by expulsion from the trade. No deceitful device escaped punishment, such as putting good wares on top of a bale, soldering broken articles together, selling second-hand goods for new.

Night work was also forbidden because work could not be done neatly at night. No one was allowed to work after six o'clock on Saturday evenings, or on the eve of Double Feasts. And since there was no supreme court in these days to protect the liberty of the fair sex in their inalienable right to work for less than a living wage, men were compelled to do all the work; for "no one shall set any woman to work, other than his wedded wife or his daughter." *Sed tempora mutantur et nos mutamur cum illis!* The times are changing and we with them.

Article XXIV

Lessons to Be Learned from the Guild Idea

There are two kinds of criticism, destructive and constructive. The first is ignorant criticism. The second is intelligent. Needless to state, all criticism should be constructive and intelligent. The guild idea is a Catholic idea. How sad, then, to find Catholics in almost every walk of life pouring out so much destructive criticism on the guild idea, which criticism is based entirely on ignorance which is always more or less the chief ingredient in destructive criticism.

If the charge were not directly that this adverse criticism was without foundation in fact, and that a wider knowledge of Catholic economic history would serve to remove most of this ignorant prejudice, it might appear irritating in the extreme. Yet what more natural thing could be suggested to Catholics than this, that they should cease flinging old mud into the face of their Holy Mother, the Roman Catholic Church, much of which mud has been slung at her before time and again by her sworn enemies in order to tarnish her fair fame before the eyes of the modern, secular, carnal-minded world for the past four hundred years?

We can do no better than to quote here a very appropriate passage from the brilliant pen of a great mediaevalist who has lately been received into the Catholic Church, whose orthodoxy therefore is now beyond dispute. In his introduction to a work of Arthur Penty's, a historian of the guild system of great weight, Gilbert K. Chesterton analyzes this ignorant criticism with his usual deadly accuracy. "Mr. Penty, the author of this book, is one of the two or three truly original minds of the modern world. In the very first chapter he proceeds to do what is always done by minds that are original; he goes back to origins. For this reason the men whose minds are narrowed by contemporary conventions always accuse any such thinker of being a sort of romantic reactionary. An absurd legend has been manufactured among the critics who have reviewed Mr. Penty's remarkable books (and who have in some cases even read them) to the effect that he regards the mediaeval period as a golden age of human perfection, and wishes the modern world to make a careful copy of it. His critics talk for all the world as if he had merely recommended us to wear pointed shoes or to practice archery. So far is this from being true that his

historical studies of mediaevalism, which are really historical, condemn many mediaeval things which it is comparatively common to admire; such as the cult of the Roman law. But this book is not a study of mediaeval, but of modern conditions. And from modern conditions alone we could deduce the absurdity of this attempt to silence anybody with a charge of sentimentalism, merely because he wishes for a reasonable restoration of certain things which were lost by accident or by anarchy.

“At the very time that such journalists are flinging about the charge of reaction, they are filling their newspapers with the necessity for reconstruction. When people wish to rebuild the villages that were burned in Belgium, we do not describe them as dreamers so deluded as to think that Belgium before the war was a paradise of perfect human happiness. When people hope to re-establish pre-war conditions of normal production or exchange, we do not charge them with thinking that the pre-war period was a golden age. We merely recognize the fact that certain things normal to the nations have been destroyed by an abnormal disaster, and that we must reconstruct them as well as we can.

“Now, it is Mr. Penty’s thesis that the recent rush of commercialism and industrialism, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have led us to an abnormal disaster; and that it remains for us to recur to the more stable social ideal, recognized not only in the Middle Ages, but in some degree in most ages, and by the great mass of mankind. That is the thesis, so far as mediaevalism is concerned; it is the business of critics to refute the thesis; and it will require a very different sort of criticism to refute it.

The Power to Return to Origins

“But the general power to return to origins is an even greater matter; and what it needs is intellectual independence. Indeed, there is an unconscious truth in the phrase of shallow people who talk of a man like Mr. Penty as if he were behind the times. In one sense he is behind the times; as we speak of a man being behind the scenes. The man behind the scenes is at the back of things and the beginning of things. He knows where the actors came from, and how the whole performance began. He has seen all the machinery and can consider the play as a play, and not as a temporary illusion. Mr. Penty has seen the machinery of the modern world and does not think much of it; he has seen the illusion of progress and prosperity which it produced on the crowd, at least to some extent and for a time, and he knows it is an illusion. That is to say, he is what so few modern people can be, he is outside the modern world, and in a sense surrounds it. He can judge it freely, not merely by comparison with a real past, but by comparison with a possible future. And, as a matter of fact, that future is becoming more and more possible. It is the present that

is becoming impossible. Those who blame Mr. Penty, for looking to the past for an alternative to industrialism, do not realize that industrialism itself shows many signs of soon becoming a thing of the past. What is called industrial unrest might more truly be described as industrial collapse; and the things that are not collapsing are exactly the old things that it was the fashion to regard as decaying, such as the ancient peasantries of Christendom. It is these modernists who are behind the times; it is these materialists who have tied their fortunes to a failure; and it is the modern industrial city that has become a home of lost causes.” – Chesterton’s preface to Penty’s *Post-Industrialism*, pp. 7-9.

The Attitude of Catholics

This puts the whole matter in a nut shell. Catholics, above all others, should be proud of their own past history. They, above all others, should cultivate the “Philosophic Habit,” viz., of suspending their judgments about things of which they are completely ignorant. Above all others they should be the last to throw mud at those good things in our past history which are the chiefest boast of intelligent Catholics, and the admiration of equally honest and intelligently educated non-Catholics. Ignorance is a fine and handy excuse for all kinds of erroneous good faith; but we ought to remember, too, that Catholic moralists are unanimous in teaching that there is an ignorance which is very culpable and highly criminal; for the lips of the Master in Israel shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at His mouth; because He is the Angel of the Lord of hosts.

Economic Justice and Equity

Who will deny that economic justice and economic equity are not goods greatly to be desired for their own sakes? Who will deny that they are conspicuously absent from our modern industrial and commercial undertakings in the main? It must be realized by every student of Catholic economic history that the mediaeval guilds existed primarily for the maintenance of economic justice and equity. If they ceased to function, the fault did not lie in any defect inherent in their constitution, but because society wilfully turned away to the worship of other gods than the God of Justice and of Equity. If modern capitalism is to be brought into subjection to moral tenets, some machinery must be found strong and righteous enough to enforce in the name of society what the guilds enforced in their day when society was more homogeneous in its moral and ethical notions as to what was right and wrong in the domain of social justice and equity, because in that good day Catholicism was co-extensive with civilized society.

People will tell you in all seriousness that a return to this old guild method of organization is impossible because it is not adapted to the intricate complex circumstances of modern industry. With a condescending smile they will tell you that “big business is big business,” “industry requires brains,” etc., as if no great big things were achieved in the guild world of the Middle Ages, and as if brains were a monopoly of plutocratic captains of industry and of their children, as if it required any kind of genius at all to be the successful operator of a soap factory. These platitudes may seem plausible to that class of weak mentality that loves to make intellectual genuflection to the dictums of plutocratic affluence, and condemns as sheer personal perversity the intelligence that is prevented from accepting them because they are unsupported by economic historic facts. Why cannot big national industrial guilds control the problems of large modern industry? Why cannot smaller local guilds, modeled on the mediaeval types, control crafts, small industries and agriculture? Is the future entirely with the large industry? Must the large industry be entirely outside of the control of the great body of workers employed by the big captain of industry or the corporation which hires him because of its own lack of business brains, which the average man believes to flourish among wealthy stockholders, thick as autumn leaves in Vallombrosa?

Not Insoluble Riddles

These questions are not insoluble riddles, any more. If there is one fact that all economists are agreed on today, it is that our present industrial system is a thing altogether abnormal. It always had in it the seeds of its own destruction. Now that it is on the verge of collapse from its own sheer, bloated, rotten weight, the discussion of alternatives for serious, forward-looking minds is beginning to wear a different and more respectable complexion.

Setting aside this line of approach altogether, what about the eternal validity and necessity of the moral principles which the mediaeval guilds existed to uphold? Since when have justice and right become social anachronisms? What can be wrong with the essential idea of the mediaeval guild whose primary function was to maintain discipline in economic things among the members of every industry? They were not so much taken up with the organization of industry as with its control. The private individual producer was not supplanted by any system of soulless co-operative production.

The principle of private management was never so sacred as it was under the guild system. It has ceased to exist in face of the methods employed to stamp it out by most of our modern trusts. The guilds superimposed stringent regulation over each industry, and at their best period were successful in promoting a certain

measure of economic equality among its members; and is not equality our greatest democratic boast? Nobody could engage in an industry who was not a member of the guild or union. What would these mediaevalists have thought of the “open shop,” the so-called American plan? Everybody was compelled to submit to the regulations of the guild which fixed prices and rates of wages, enforced a certain standard of quality in the product, regulated apprenticeship, prevented under severe fines and expulsion from engaging in trade at all, adulteration or bad workmanship, and kept a stiff reign over all matters pertaining to the conduct of an industry, as well as looked after the personal welfare of its individual members.

What in God’s name is impossible about the application of these same principles today? There is no technical difficulty in the establishment of this same control over industry today, no matter how widely different may be the circumstances of modern industry from that of mediaeval times. The principles to be applied are nothing else than the enforcement of moral standards. In a word, the obstacles in the way of a restoration of the guild idea are not technical, they are moral. For our part, we are Christian enough to think that big business can and should be as honest as small, because other things being equal, the graver the matter, the bigger the sin of injustice.

Article XXV

Chat About Guild Life

The American Hierarchy in their joint pastoral of February 22nd, 1920, advocated a revival of the guild idea in the following passages: “In his pronouncement of labor (*Rerum Novarum*), Pope Leo XIII describes the advantages to be derived by both employer and employe from ‘associations and organizations which draw the two classes more closely together.’” Such associations are especially needed at the present time.

While the labor union or trade union has been, and still is, necessary in the struggle of the workers for fair wages and fair conditions of employment, we have to recognize that its history, methods and objects have made it essentially a militant organization. The time seems now to have arrived when it should be, not supplanted, but supplemented, by associations or conferences, composed jointly of employers and employes, which will place emphasis upon the common interests rather than the divergent aims of the two parties, upon co-operation rather than conflict.

Through such arrangements, all classes would be greatly benefited. The worker would participate in those matters of industrial management which directly concern him and about which he possesses helpful knowledge; he would acquire an increased sense of personal dignity and personal responsibility, take greater

interest and pride in his work, and become more efficient and more contented. The employer would have the benefit of willing co-operation from, and harmonious relations with, his employees. The consumer, in common with employer and employee, would share in the advantages of larger and steadier production. In a word, industry would be carried on as a co-operative enterprise for the common good, and not as a contest between two parties for a restricted product.

The Remedy

Deploring the social changes which have divided “society into two widely different castes,” of which one “holds power because it holds wealth,” while the other is “the needy and. powerless multitude,” Pope Leo XIII declared that the remedy is “to induce as many as possible of the humbler classes to become owners” (*Rerum Novarum*). This recommendation is in exact accord with the traditional teaching and practice of the Church. When her social influence was greatest, in the later Middle Ages, the prevailing economic system was such that the workers were gradually obtaining a larger share in the ownership of the lands upon which, and the tools with which, they labored.

“Though the economic arrangements of that time cannot be restored, *the underlying principle is of permanent application*, and should be applied to our present system as rapidly as conditions will permit.” (The Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop and Bishops of the United States, published February 22nd, 1920.)

But the enforcement of economic justice and equity, though fundamental, was not the only aim of the guild life in mediaeval times. Not on bread alone doth man live. In these Catholic days, men loved the happy life because a happy life is a good thing. Therefore, social conviviality was always an indispensable requisite of the gatherings of guildsmen. Joyous banquets were held on every great public occasion. We dine no more. We are in too much of a hurry nowadays. We just eat. The fine old Catholic virtue of good cheer is still discussed by moralists who denounce sadness as the great enemy of sanctity. It was not yet a sin to smile in the Middle Ages. The Puritans were not born for long centuries after. Catholics had not yet absorbed too much of the sour spirit of Methodism. Religion and charity and that most human and beautiful, because so Catholic, virtue of Eutrapelia – cheery conversation and games – made life worth living in these good old days.

Days of Practical Faith

Every guild had a chaplain. Candles and wine for altars and shrines were provided by the guild because the good people of these Mediaeval times believed in saints and relics and miracles. It is only in these, our enlightened days, that

people are found so ignorant as not to know even about the existence of these things. We have seen, in the flesh, a university professor who stated that he could not bring himself to believe in a miracle intellectually! University professors in the Middle Ages were not so intellectually superstitious as to take refuge in a coincidence to explain away a miracle.

A certain number of masses were offered up for the special intentions of the guild. Every guild, of course, had a patron saint. We like to go directly to God, says the modern man. But if some good politician wants to get a postmastership, to how many patrons must he not bend the oily hinges of the knee! Prayers and masses were said for the departed members. The sick were cared for and visited in charity hospitals. In this commercial age of ours, charging a fixed price is considered more respectable because enough rich people are always sick and must be cared for first, of course. As was said before, business is business.

The guilds paid dowries for girls entering a convent or getting married. The sick were all provided for. The civil authority, or the king directly, delegated vast civic powers also to the guilds, so much so that at times they were thought to control entirely the government of the municipality. The early city charter had nearly always a clause giving power to erect a guild. Every city wanted such a privilege because its prosperity depended on the presence of such an organization as we have been describing.

Present Day Need

You will say it is impossible to have things like that now, and so it is. We cannot push the world back to the thirteenth, though it was the greatest, of centuries. But what we do want and must have, as the American Hierarchy stated in their joint pastoral, is an adapting to our economic needs of the spirit and the principles so wisely applied in the various mediaeval guilds when the full life of the Catholic Church permeated society and when she was strong and free to exert her great influence on economic dealings, which we must have the courage to exercise again if the modern social order is to be reconstructed at all after every other remedy has failed to hold it decently together, even in bad working condition.

We would ask you also to take particular notice how, in these halcyon days, the people governed themselves. (See Father Busch's articles, "The Church and Democracy," May, 1923, *Catholic Bulletin*.) Mediaeval towns were not run by a knot of crooked politicians. When they wanted some reform they did not wait for federal congresses or senates to pass laws thousands of miles away from where it was needed. There was no fool-belt legislation like that with which old women west of Milwaukee load statute books every session of the legislature.

The Whole Man

These people especially grasped the great truth that we seem to have lost sight of completely in our day, *viz.*, the fact that religion concerns the whole man. It is not a thing for holidays or the Sunday school alone, but must be the governing principle for man in all his activities, be they family, economic, social or civic. It was not a private affair that must be kept for the pew or the home only. Rather, it determined every thing and every principle that governed men in all their relations, family, social, civic, commercial and industrial. Truth and justice and charity are good and nice things for the home and for one's friends. They are naturally and supernaturally indispensable, likewise, in one's dealings with one's fellowman.

In these ages of faith, also, besides economic guilds, there were others of a purely religious nature as well as benevolent in their aims. Philanthropy in these days was not that sickly sentimentalism called "humanitarianism" that social uplifters prate so much about nowadays. It was altogether inspired by motives of charity and religion because it was done in the sweet name of Christ. "We hear a lot about the lazy monks and their unscientific, indiscriminate charity. The best answer for illiterate folk who make such charges is the statement of the fact that pauperism was unknown in these days, which proves that the monastic brand of charity was absolutely efficient and effective because our three great social evils of unemployment, poverty, and pauperism were unknown until after we fell heirs to all the social and educational blessings of the grand and glorious Protestant Reformation.

The Guilds in Their Flower

The period during which guildhood reached its finest flowering began in the thirteenth century and lasted until the end of the fifteenth. The craft guilds existed earlier and continued later. The legislation under which they were organized existed in its essentials until the eighteenth century. They were not created to exploit by monopoly each exclusive trade. Their main object was to include within each association all the approved workmen employed in a particular trade in the same town. They aimed at regulating all trading and producing concerns within their own territory.

Sometimes, like trade unions, they extended over very wide areas, e. g., the builders' guild of Germany was divided into four central organizations. Guild monopoly justly administered was sought so as to regulate the prices of raw materials and finished products, to determine the maximum hours of work, the number of apprentices, the wages of assistants, to prevent undue competitive waste, excessive wealth in the hands of a few individuals, excessive poverty, and

to control the quantity offered for sale in order to prevent waste in any line of productivity.

Technical skill and good reputation were necessary in order to be admitted to the craft guild. Master workmen, journeymen, assistants, and apprentices all worked together. This did not militate against the democratic nature of the guild associations. In the words of Professor Seligman, "a conflict of interests was unknown." The journeyman always looked forward to the period when he would be admitted, to the freedom of the trade.

This was, as a rule, not difficult for an expert workman to attain. No insuperable obstacle was thrown in his path. In fact, there was no superabundance of skilled labor. It was a period of the supremacy of labor, or the human personal element over capital, for the master himself worked beside the fellow artisan. There was no monopoly in the sense that the man who could qualify could not always be admitted.

The Guild Courts

The guilds had their own courts in which members were tried and punished for delinquencies. The delay, expense, and suspicion of modern legal procedure were thus entirely eliminated. There was no room for class hatred where there was such a corporate community of interests. The worst penalty that could be inflicted on a guild member was expulsion from the guild, whereby he could not practice his craft in the town or ever hope to be a master workman. They feared this stigma worse than any fine. The craft officials were changed every year. In France it was customary to do this during the chanting of the Magnificat at vespers in the middle of the verse, *Deposuit potentes de sede et exaltavit humiles*. "He hath put down the mighty from their high places and he hath exalted the humble." The old ones stepped out at the first half and the new ones took their seats at the second.

Article XXVI

No Multi-Millionaires or Paupers Possible Under the Guild System

You must get the idea out of your head completely that the master craftsman in the guild system was anything like a capitalistic employer of labor in our own times. The master craftsman was capitalist, laborer, merchant, entrepreneur or employer, and business manager all in one person. He was none of these things exclusively, because he partook of the nature and worked every day at some one phase of all of them. He bought his raw materials unless his customers brought them to him to have them worked up into the finished product. He made his own wares and marketed them in his shop or at the fair in the town or city.

The guild never tolerated these economic parasites which are bleeding us to death – the unnecessary middlemen. There were no idle rich. Everybody performed some useful or necessary social service. It was a special honor and dignity to work in those days, so far removed was the spirit of the age from that of the ancient and our own modern paganism.

No one could hire another to work in his stead. Each one was obliged to manage his own small and honest enterprise. Widows might hire a man to run the little business managed by their deceased husbands. Catholicity is always the religion of the widow and the orphan. The number of apprentices and assistants that any master craftsman might engage was strictly limited, otherwise the apprentice could not get a proper training and the road would be open to the employment of child labor, which is one of our great outstanding national disgraces in America today. And like the rights of the fair sex, the supreme court in its decisions is jealous for the inalienable rights of little innocent boys and girls compelled to labor from their tenderest years. So long as the stars and stripes of Old Glory shall fly proudly – shall we say triumphantly? – over this land of the free and home of the brave, so long will the blessings of our immortal Constitution – the civil voice of God – be interpreted as protecting the sacred liberties of our little embryo citizens to be forced to work any number of hours, and any number of days, for any sort of wages that our patriotic, kind and gentle captains of industry freely agree to pay them!

Thus hath it been ordained and decreed by the fathers of our country in the fifth and fourteenth amendments to the Constitution of the United States of America, as quoted in the usual five-to-four opinion handed down by the highest court in our land. For, no matter what may be the crying need to protect the economically weak against the economically strong, it has been written into the fundamental law that “no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

To suggest even that this constitutional provision should be amended or interpreted in favor of giving a decent chance to the youth of both sexes to grow up as young American citizens should grow up, at school and at play; in favor of the human natural economic rights of our mothers and our wives, our sisters and our daughters, is to challenge the odium of being dubbed un-American, radical, red and foreign! And we are the same consistent Americans that were ready to sacrifice the last man and the last dollar in order to free the Imperial German Empires of Central Europe from the autocracy of Hapsburg and Hohenzollern, and to make every square foot of this round Earth safe for the bounteous blessings of Jeffersonian democracy!

Points and Effects of the Guild System

Under the mediaeval guild system nobody could become very rich, but the great majority became very happy, temporally and spiritually. No one could have more than one trade. There could be no interlocking directorates. Of course the Sherman anti-trust law was altogether unnecessary because the guildsmen enforced their own statutes honestly. The raw materials were often bought by the entire guild fellowship and divided equally among the master workmen at a standard just price. No Wall Street “cornering” of the market could be attempted. If one enterprising individual purchased a big amount, he was bound by law to give all the other master craftsmen their share of it, at the purchase price, until it was divided up evenly.

Imagine one of our great big cold storage plants under a law like that. How long would profiteering last? What if our wealthiest citizen, John D. Rockefeller, of oily fame, was compelled by a fourteenth amendment interpreted by some angelic four-to-five decision, to sell shares of his crude supply at the price at which he purchased it, until the whole was divided up evenly among master oil refiners of innumerable gasoline guilds? The old gentleman wouldn’t need so many private detectives guarding his sacred person then, nor would he get such publicity from our great metropolitan dailies for the laudable pleasure his evangelical soul derives from teaching First Baptist Sunday school, and otherwise promoting by philanthropic foundations the interests of the Kingdom of God, now so dear to his pious, charitable heart.

No secret purchases were allowed. Co-operative buying and selling were very common. There was no legal limitation to the hours of work for those who worked for themselves. They had sense enough to stop when they felt like it. Neither had they any of those one-half-of-one-per-cent amendments telling them what they should drink when they felt thirsty after a good, honest day’s work.

It was a pleasure for men to work in those days. Machinery and the division and subdivision of labor had not yet made it a slavish drudgery. Again, the laborer was working for himself. No man has reached his full human stature until he is his own master in owning and controlling the instruments of wealth production. That is the essence of private property. That is why the Catholic Church so jealously guards this sacred human right. That is why the American Hierarchy so emphatically declared in their program of social reconstruction that “the majority must somehow become owners, or at least in part, of the instruments of production. They can be enabled to reach this stage gradually through co-operative productive societies and co-partnership arrangements. In the former, the workers own and manage the industries themselves; in the latter they own a substantial part of the corporate stock and exercise a reasonable share in the management. However slow the

attainment of these ends, they will have to be reached before we can have a thoroughly efficient system of production, or an industrial and social order that will be secure from the danger of revolution.”

Mediaeval Recreation

Above all, in these good old days there was plenty of fine, healthful recreation. There was no haste. All the necessary work was well done. Nobody worked on Sundays, and the number of holidays was strictly enforced by the guilds. Between Sundays and holidays, the laborers had ninety days of rest in the year. Then the grand and glorious Protestant Reformation happened along to free the people from the tyranny of priests and monks. They taught them to hate and abolish the mass and every other Catholic and superstitious practice. The best thing to do was to work on Sundays in order to show how free they had become from the tyranny of popery. Soon the poor laborer became so free from this mediaeval Romish tyranny that the capitalists succeeded in bestowing on him the great democratic privilege of working three hundred and sixty-five days in the ordinary year, and three hundred and sixty-six every leap year, for a starvation wage.

How often have we heard even Catholics – God bless the mark! – boasting that we in this country have got over all this foolishness of keeping so many holidays! Propaganda Reformation lies have done their work. And still the poor dupes think that they are more progressive than any people the world ever saw before, because they have all their recreation stolen from them, and they are kept day after day by hard, exacting masters with their noses to the grindstone of dreary, exhausting labors. Is it not amusing in the extreme even to the most obtuse sense of humor, to hear so-called educated and apparently civilized persons thanking their twentieth century stars that they are treated by their slave task-masters little better than Missouri mules?

In order to show how sacrilegious the Catholics were who, true to their mediaeval traditions, used to enjoy themselves on Sundays and holidays by dancing and various games, the Puritans in this free country loaded statute books with a whole system of blue laws for the proper evangelical observance of the Lord's day. Anybody that was not so happy as to have a job that kept him working hard on the Sabbath, was to live so far as possible inside doors, with the blinds piously drawn. Nobody dared to allow himself to smile without that guiltiest feeling that his conduct smacked of popery!

Labor, Charity and Religion

The guild life of the Middle Ages was a life of labor, charity and religion, but above all and because of this Catholic blend and sense of proportion, it was a life of joy. The artisan took a pride and delight in his work. You have only to look at the masterpieces they have left behind in their sacred monuments, at once the admiration and the despair of these degenerate days. Every artisan in these old times was gifted with an artistic soul, and every artist was only an artisan. Nowadays he has to let his hair grow long, quit his job, and become generally crazy before his genius is recognized. An artist in modern acceptance is one that cannot otherwise make a decent living, and gives recitals in girls' schools.

The poetic soul of Oliver Goldsmith has immortalized the simpler joys of other days. In inscribing his masterpiece to his friend, Sir Joshua Reynolds, he deplored the decay of this happy, contented peasant life once so common, and so dear to the wandering bard.

"In regretting the depopulation of the country, I inveigh against the increase of our luxuries; and here also I expect the shout of modern politicians against me. For twenty or thirty years past, it has been the fashion to consider luxury as one of the greatest natural advantages; and all the wisdom of antiquity, in that particular, as erroneous. Still, however, I must remain a professed ancient on that head, and continue to think those luxuries prejudicial to states by which so many vices are introduced, and so many kingdoms have been undone." Here are the reasons for his sadness:

Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain,
 Where health and plenty cheer'd the laboring swain,
 Where smiling spring its earliest visit paid,
 And parting summer's lingering blooms delayed:
 Dear lovely bowers of innocence and ease,
 Seats of my youth, when every sport could please,
 How often have I loitered o'er thy green,
 Where humble happiness endeared each scene!
 How often have I paused on every charm –
 The shelter'd cot, the cultivated farm,
 The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
 The decent church that topped the neighboring hill,
 The hawthorn bush, with seats beneath the shade,
 For talking age and whispering lovers made!
 How often have I bless'd the coming day,
 When toil remitting lent its turn to play,

And all the village train, from labor free,
 Led up their sports beneath the spreading tree;
 While many a pasttime circled in the shade,
 The young contending as the old survey'd;
 And many a gambol frolicked o'er the ground,
 And sleights of art and feats of strength went round;
 And still as each repeated pleasure tired,
 Succeeding sports the mirthful band inspired;
 The dancing pair that simply sought renown
 By holding out to tire each other down;
 The swain, mistrustful of his smutted face,
 While secret laughter tittered round the place;
 The bashful virgin's sidelong looks of love,
 The matron's glance that would those looks reprove.
 These were thy charms, sweet village! sports like these
 With sweet succession, taught e'en toil to please;
 These round thy bowers their cheerful influence shed;
 These were thy charms, but all these charms are fled.
 —Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*.

Article XXVII

No Female or Child Labor Tolerated by the Guilds

The towns of the Middle Ages were real centers of Christian culture. That is, they were inhabited by men and women who appreciated the higher things of life. The industrial centers that we call cities now are huge barracks where capitalists house their workmen and charge them exorbitant rents for the privilege of allowing them to spend a few hours away from their factories, mines and sweatshops. The rich live away out in the more fashionable suburbs as far as they can get from the poor quarters of the towns and cities.

Here are a few facts for those who are not accustomed to use their eyes. In 1919 the coal commission of England showed that in one town about 27,000 out of 38,000 people lived in one or two-room houses. In another, 28 per cent of the population were living in houses of one room only. In Lanarkshire, out of 188,000 children born, 28,000 died before they reached the age of one year.

Our American industrial cities of whose greatness we are so ignorantly proud are just as bad. How our foolish hearts swell with pride as we boast of New York's eight millions of people and growing all the time! What misery is contained in that eight millions God alone knows. "During the last decade the rate of increase for the urban population has been nearly five times that for rural population. The highest

urban population is found in New England, where four-fifths of the people live in cities. More than one-fourth of the people in the United States are living in the sixty-eight cities of over one hundred thousand inhabitants, while nearly one-tenth of the total population resides in the three largest cities, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Over one-twentieth of our population is found in New York City alone.” (*Social Problems*, Towne, pp. 21-22.) No less than 51.4 per cent of our population are dwellers in towns or cities and 48.6 per cent rural.

Child Labor

In the year 1910 there were about two million child laborers in the United States. This was more than one out of every six children from ten to fifteen years of age. Eighteen thousand of our little boys and girls have a beautiful time working in mines and quarries and about 80,000 in the textile industries. Some of the school principals of Philadelphia have testified regarding the children who migrate from that big center of population and brotherly love to aid in gathering the crops, “that the children who returned from the country after the berry picking and canning season were in a most deplorable condition, morally, physically, and intellectually, due to improper food, poor housing and want of supervision.” (National Child Labor Committee, pamphlet 237, page 5.)

The only reason for this condition of things is to be found in the immoral greed of their employers. “The origin of child labor grew out of the sordid desire of employers to secure labor at the lowest possible cost regardless of the law of nature or of man.” (Nation Child Labor Committee, pamphlet 185, page 5.) “Children work cheaply; they have no unions and thus are not able to bargain advantageously for their labor; and their work is seemingly very profitable to an employer. The president of the United Textile Workers has said that child labor is employed simply because it is cheap and unresisting.” (Towne, *Social Problems*, pp. 65-66.)

Women in Gainful Occupation

In these great United States also there are about eleven million women engaged in some form of gainful occupation. This means that one-fifth of all the wage-earners of the country are women. Of all the women in the country, ten years of age and over, somewhat over one-fifth are wage-earners. In the very highly cultured states of the east, such as Massachusetts and Rhode Island, nearly one-third of all the females above ten years of age are engaged in some gainful occupation, chiefly in factories. Who takes care of the children of the working mothers? Generally, nobody.

In almost every special study that has been made in different parts of the country, it has been shown that women's wages tend to be far below the minimum cost of living. Is it any wonder, then, that intelligent men smile when they hear all this cant about liberty, and equality, and progress, and democracy, and even the Constitution of the United States, which has been interpreted by the highest court in the land as an obstacle to the constitutionality of legislation preventing child labor, and guaranteeing a minimum wage to women wage-earners? Is it any wonder also that they smile more broadly when they are forced to listen to these ignorant progressive moderns condescendingly referring to the dark ages, mediaevalism, etc., as uncivilized periods of the world's history?

No wonder that Lowell was forced to confess "a singular sympathy with the Middle Ages." No wonder Dr. De Wulf writes in his illuminating book, *Philosophy and Civilization in the Middle Ages*: "The feudal sentiment *par excellence* . . . is the sentiment of the value and dignity of the individual man. The feudal man lived as a free man; he was master in his own house; he sought his end in himself; he was – and this is a scholastic expression – *propter seipsum existens* (an autocentric being), all feudal obligations were founded upon respect for personality and the given word."

And Dr. Ralph Adams Cram: "Of course this admirable scheme of society with its guild system of industry, its absence of usury in any form and its just sense of comparative values, was shot through and through with religion both in faith and practice. Catholicism was universally and implicitly accepted. Monasticism had redeemed Europe from barbarism and Cluny had freed the Church from the yoke of German imperialism. This unity and immanence of religion gave a consistency to society otherwise unobtainable, and poured its vitality into every form of human thought and action." (Cram, *Introduction to Historia Calamitatum of Abelard*, page 3.)

Women and children, like the men of the Middle Ages, found a joy in life peculiar to their years and sex. For about thirteen millions of them in the United States today, thanks to the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness guaranteed them by the fifth and fourteenth amendments to our constitution, life is made a laborious respite between one nervous prostration and the next from underpaid overwork.

Recreations in Guild Days

The guild folk, of course, had to get along as best they could without fetid moving picture halls. They had beautiful guild halls for indoor recreation. They had beautifully, richly adorned and sculptured churches and grand cathedrals which even today it is no small part of a liberal education to gaze upon. They had

their pageants and miracle and morality plays, and festivals, banquets and rejoicings. Cheer and merriment were universal.

The real Catholic religion and gloom cannot exist side by side. It never seeks to crush innocent pleasure out of the lives of others. It was left to post-Reformation seriousness to do that, through puritanism, and rigorism, and uplifters, and anti-cigarette crusades and prohibition. We live now no more. The whole world is unhappy. Masses just exist in the hope that it will all end some fine day, and all the misery incidental to being born into God's beautiful world will happily cease! How God's best gifts to men are abused and perverted, and how misguided ignoramuses will still go on prating of civilization and progress, education and liberty, and patriotism. We remember a distinguished orator some years ago beginning his discourse with the exclamation: "Star of the twentieth century, we salute thee!"

No Class Hatreds

If class hatred was unknown in mediaeval days, it was because the public good ruled everything. The Church had imbued the minds of the guildsmen with the principles of Catholic morality, especially the precepts of justice and charity. Each guild made careful investigation into the quality of the goods produced. Even the tools used had to be good and honest. Scrupulous care was taken by the producers that each article would be of the best possible quality. If a poor article was purchased, the buyer had only to appeal to the guild for redress. The craft of tailors in Bristol, for example, compelled a tailor to give back the money taken for an imperfectly made garment and to wear the same himself!

And this is a specimen of the medicine, though apparently drastic, that would go a long way to cure certain prevalent crooked practices in business. It is a statute of the London bracemakers drawn up in the year 1355, "If any one shall be found making false work, let the same work be brought before the mayor and aldermen, and before them let it be adjudged upon as being false or forfeited; and let such person go bodily to prison." Compare this drastic legislation to prevent dishonesty, in what we could call minor details, with the flagrant abuses that have grown up unchecked under the capitalistic regime. If we had a modern pillory erected in our public city squares, who should occupy the most conspicuous places of torture? Where would our war profiteers be at present, men whose offenses and crimes were connived at by even uniformed officers, high up in the services of their respective countries?

We seem to have lost completely that high sense of righteousness which those simple, honest guildsmen possessed in the Middle Ages, because the main object of the craft guilds was not their own selfish interests, but the common good. They

did unto others as they desired others to do unto them. They are and will be forever the finest type of industrial democracy in all the world.

Supervision and Regulation for the Common Good

The guilds never allowed over production, and its direct effect, periods of unemployment, were thus eliminated. A surplus of apprentices could not be taken into any trade. They had to seek admittance into some trade that was undermanned. The problem of female labor was also carefully regulated. No organization has ever been so consistently devoted to the true development of woman's powers and the promotion of her temporal and spiritual welfare as the Catholic Church.

We could turn aside to talk of the brilliant galaxy of learned women who flourished in the cloisters of the Middle Ages. Certainly that great age would not tolerate the conditions revealed in the summary of a New York State factory investigation a few years before the late war to make the world safe for democracy. Here is some of the evidence, as given in the American Federation of Labor's news letter at the time:

"Testimony has been adduced which shows that in many instances the children were compelled to work or the entire family would face starvation. It was shown that the prices of the necessities of life are higher than ever before in the history of the United States and the earnings of the tenement dwellers so low that, even the entire family working, the average was only \$7 a week. The stories related under oath are almost unbelievable in their recital of hunger and misery. They deal with women working side by side with men in iron foundries, performing tasks far beyond their strength, and subject to sudden changes in temperature which result in many instances in fatal diseases; of women working nine to fourteen hours nightly in factories and mills, and of mere children working in canneries until long into the night. Babies of eighteen months are being trained to sort out artificial petals, and children of tender age, some less than five years, are being used to take advantage of the Christian holidays to dress dolls, extract meat from nuts, etc."

In front of factories like that described above there is invariably erected a staff from the top of which is flown a flag that is the symbol of all that is great and glorious and free. But what meaning has it for those women and children ground into slavery below its sacred folds? It is for all of us to put away hypocrisy, and cant, and claptrap, and work by tongue and pen unceasingly until every vestige of such barbarous cruelty, as never existed before these dark ages of the twentieth century, be removed from our national escutcheon.

Let us dare, in spite of pagan criticism, to be as Catholic and honest as the great Pope, Leo XIII, who declared that, "Women are not suited for certain occupations; a woman is by nature fitted for home work, and it is that which is best adapted to

preserve her modesty and to promote the good upbringing of children and the well-being of the family.” And again the great Pontiff, thinking of the hard lot of those little ones whom the Savior treated so tenderly: “And they brought to Him young children that He might touch them. And the disciples rebuked those that brought them. Whom when Jesus saw, He was much displeased, and saith to them: ‘Suffer the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God.’ (Mark, X, 13, 14.)” “But because labor had been handed over to the merciless greed of capital under a system that was no longer influenced by the saving principle of the Catholic Church, woman consequently was to be exploited in common with man, and even her helpless little ones were not to be spared by ‘the greedy speculators,’ as Pope Leo XIII wrote, ‘who use human beings as mere instruments for money-making.’ ” (Husslein, S. J., *The World Problem, Capital, Labor and the Church*, page 253.)

Article XXVIII

Cut-Throat Competition Eliminated Completely by Guild Standards

Professor Lethaby, lecturing on “Technical Education in the Building Trades,” has this very apropos passage on the guild system: “In the Middle Ages, the masons’ and carpenters’ guilds were faculties or colleges of education in these arts, and every town was, so to say, a craft university. Corporations of masons, carpenters, and the like, were established in the towns; each craft aspired to have a college hall. The universities themselves have been well named, by a recent historian, ‘scholars’ guilds.’

“The guild, which recognized all the customs of its trade, guaranteed the relations of the apprentice and the master craftsman with whom he was placed; but he was really apprenticed to the craft as a whole, and ultimately to the city, whose freedom he engaged to take up. He was, in fact, a graduate of his craft college and wore its robes. At a later stage the apprentice became a companion or bachelor of his art, or by producing a masterwork, the thesis of his craft, he was admitted a master. Only then was he permitted to become an employer of labor, or was admitted as one of the governing body of his college.

“As a citizen, city dignities were open to him. He might become the master in building some abbey or cathedral, or, as king’s mason, become a member of the royal household, the acknowledged great master of his time in mason-craft. With such a system, was it so very wonderful that the buildings of the Middle Ages, which were indeed wonderful, should have been produced?”

Definable Standards of Thought

We are sure that a more thorough understanding of the underlying principles of the mediaeval guild system would place many a student of social and industrial problems in a better position to face and solve our modern difficulties in this field. Clear thinking is impossible without some clear and definable standards of thought. We must have definite conceptions of the nature of truth, goodness and beauty before we would go on to say what was true, and good, and beautiful.

The underlying idea of the guild system was that men should be organized in groups, and that the state existed to facilitate their co-operation. In industry the natural division and grouping would be separate trades. Two principal functions always were predominant in the activities of the guilds. The most primary was that of mutual aid. The second was the safeguarding of the standard of production against commercial abuses of any and every description.

Trade unions in our day try to effect the first of these ends, but for lack of funds they operate of course on a much smaller scale than did the wealthy guilds. Our poor laws fulfill the function also, but in a very different spirit. This is altogether natural. There cannot exist the same personal and human ties between a pauper and a board of poor law guardians as existed between the members of a guild in a mediaeval town, and their widows and orphans, and sick, and unprovided-for girls. Personal and human ties, supernaturalized by motives of Christian justice and charity, are naturally a superior bond to a poor law administered by a piece of impersonal machinery for assisting those unfortunate people who we think have no personal claims upon us, but only on the community. The stranger within the gates will never be treated as generously as our own kith and kin.

Standard of Production

The standard of production was the next important function, but a very vital one in guild life. Their fine instinct for sociological truth told these shrewd mediaeval guildsmen that their standard of living could not ultimately be safeguarded unless the guild protected a high and honest standard of quality in craftsmanship.

“This is the vitalizing principle of the guilds as industrial organizations, and it is only by relating all their regulations to this central idea that they can be properly understood.

“To protect the standard of craftsmanship it was necessary, before everything else, that the craftsman should be privileged, for privilege not only protected him from the competition of unscrupulous rivals, but it also secured him leisure in his work. Both of these conditions are necessary for the production of good work. Unless a man can work leisurely, it is impossible for him to put his best thought

into his work, and unless a man is protected from the competition of unscrupulous rivals, who undercut him in price and jerry their work in the unseen parts, it is impossible for him to remain a conscientious producer. Experience has proved that the public, as consumers, cannot be relied upon to check that gradual deterioration in the quality of wares which is the inevitable accompaniment of unfettered individual competition.

“Privilege and protection are the cornerstones of production for use and beauty, just as much as commercialism and competition are the cornerstones of production for profit. The fundamental difference between the mediaeval and modern policy is that, whereas the modern aims at the abolition of all privilege, the mediaevalist sought to secure privileges for all. It is the difference between pulling down and building up.” (A. Penty, *Old Worlds for New*, pp. 48, 49.)

Against Unfair Competition

No underselling, therefore, or unfair or dishonest methods of competition were allowed. A just price was fixed for the raw material, and a fair and equally just price allowed for the finished product. No more could be charged for the article. There were no parasitic middlemen to eat up the profits that they now exact from the ultimate consumer. There was severe punishment for improper advertising. Honesty and merit were the only trade marks. There was no need of warning the public against spurious imitations. High prices due to monopolistic practices, and therefore unjustly high cost of living, were unknown.

This leads Hallam, though he was no lover of the Middle Ages, to make the remark: “After every allowance has been made, I should find it difficult to resist the conclusion that, however the laborer has derived benefit from the cheapness of manufactured articles and from many inventions of common utility, he is much inferior in ability to support a family to his ancestors three or four centuries ago.” (*View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages*.) Rogers, also, could write with truth indeed that “the masses of the people were losers by the Reformation.”

Average Wealth of Families

“A careful study has recently been made in regard to the average wealth of the families in Massachusetts and Wisconsin, two of the states having the most complete records in regard to property ownership. Comparisons were made between the concentration of wealth in these two states and concentration in the United Kingdom, Prussia and France.

“One of the most striking features of this study is that the curves showing the degree of concentration in Massachusetts are almost identical with those of

Wisconsin; while both of these, in turn, show but very slight variation from the curves which show the concentration of wealth in the United Kingdom, France and Prussia. A slight variation is found in the chart of the United Kingdom, showing a greater concentration there than in other countries. In the United Kingdom, the poorest 65 per cent of the inhabitants possess only about one-sixtieth of the property, while one two-hundredth of the population owns half of the property. In none of the countries studied did the poorest 65 per cent control more than about one-twentieth of the property.

“In Massachusetts and Wisconsin, which probably typify conditions throughout the United States, it was found that more than one-half, almost three-fifths of the property, was possessed by two per cent, or one-fiftieth of the people; and that almost one-fourth of the entire property was possessed by one four-hundredth of the people. A comparison of the present-day conditions of wealth with the conditions several decades ago leads to the conclusion that the rich are growing decidedly richer, and that the poor are ‘also gaining in wealth, though relatively at a less rapid pace than the rich.’

Concentration of Wealth

“It is apparent that such concentration of wealth as these figures indicate, such control over the resources of the country in the hands of a very few, may prevent the wage-earner from receiving a fair return for his labor. A monopolistic control of any natural resource, or of the capital with which further wealth is produced, may, and invariably does, result in an excessive share of income going to property rather than to services. Thus, inequality of wealth is not only an accompanying feature of poverty, but through inequality in the control of the means of production, may also be a very important factor in preventing the wage-earner from getting his share in distribution, and thus in crowding him down into poverty.” (Towne, *Social Problems*, pp. 303-304.)

The careful study mentioned by Professor Towne is: King, *Wealth and Income of the People of the United States*. It will be noticed that the margin in the relative ratio of pauperism to plutocracy is greatest in our mother country. England über alles! We wonder, then, and ask coolly and deliberately of every Fourth of July patriotic speaker, wherein consists the economic blessings of political democracy as it works out in industrial practice? There is a larger and larger audience listening to you today who are not satisfied at all intellectually, as an answer to this question, with a request that the band strike up a few bars of *The Star Spangled Banner*, no matter what may be our pious wish with regard to the endurance of its waving.

No wonder Leo XIII, that great Pope of the workingman, cried out on beholding the sad lot of our proletariat and expressed his sincerest sympathy for “the needy and powerless multitude, broken down and suffering and ever ready for disturbance, because, all isolated and helpless, they have been surrendered to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition.” And still we are always ready to shout our empty heads off because of all the myriad blessings of this new Reformation freedom! We probably have enough ourselves and we think nothing of those who around about us lack even the necessities of life. The spirit of the Reformation has affected us to an extent greater than we would be willing to admit. It is hard to touch pitch without becoming defiled. We will refuse to be our brother’s keeper.

The Middle Ages

“Today it is the Middle Ages that claim our interest and understanding, for there are signs everywhere that the era inaugurated by humanism and Protestantism, and carried forward on the two great tidal waves of industrialism and the French Revolution, is already passing away. We have gained much in the way of intellectual freedom, political privileges, and the creature comforts from these changes; but it is beginning to be realized that we have sold a large measure of our birthright for this appetizing mess of pottage. Above all, the temple of the human spirit lies in ruins, its altars are overthrown, and the wild asses pasture undisturbed within its walls. And though, as we must, we bring all the appliances of a scientific civilization and the fruits of accumulated knowledge to assist us in the task of reconstruction, we can learn much from the men of the Middle Ages, for they were supreme architects in this manner of building, and the temple they set up lasted a thousand years.” (Muezzin, *London Athenaeum*, May, 1917, p. 234.)

Article XXIX

Apprentice Life and the Guild System

Before a craftsman was received into the guild he had to serve a certain number of years as an apprentice. The normal limit of the term of apprenticeship was seven years. During this time the apprentice lived in his master’s house as a member of his family. He was often punished corporally for moral and other delinquencies. In France there was a rule that no apprentice should be beaten by a master’s wife. The master took care of the apprentice in every way and showed him every secret of his trade. If a guild member was unworthy for any reason, he could not receive any apprentice because of this unworthiness.

After a person had learned the trade or craft he could spend a number of years traveling around perfecting his art. This was of the nature of a traveling scholarship in our modern universities. These were called journeymen. The number of apprentices and journeymen was legally proportioned. Compare these humane and reasonable regulations with the state of things in English mines and factories after the Reformation.

Pauperism, as we saw, began and soon reached enormous proportions after the Reformation. The children of paupers were forced to work. They were actually bought and sold like gang-slaves. The poor little things even at the tender age of five and six were driven from parish to parish to work in factories. They got no pay and were served with merely the cheapest foods as a return for their labor. If they fell through weakness, they were beaten. They were chained to the machines, and at night were locked up in sleeping huts against all the laws of hygiene and sanitation. They generally worked from five to six in the morning until nine to ten at night. They were kept awake by a whip judiciously administered as soon as drowsiness was noticed. Those that survived disease succumbed to overwork and undernourishment. (See C. J. Hayes, *A Political and Social History of Europe*.)

Boys and girls of the tenderest years were chained to carts like dogs and driven into the coal pits of England. The Catholic Church was dead in England and its successor was on the side of capitalism. That was a sample of the kind of liberty and freedom and progress it brought in the Anglo-Saxon world; and it exists there today for the same reason, namely, that no moral principle is ever allowed to stand in the way of keeping these Anglo-Saxons from getting what they want. The factories and pits under these conditions became hotbeds of immorality. The whole man was degraded and enslaved physically, mentally and morally.

Today and in the Middle Ages

With a few exceptions the laborer today is condemned to be a laborer for ever. Not so in the Middle Ages, for then the apprentice and the journeyman laborer were looking forward to the day when he could become a master workman and own the tools of his own trade. The journeymen and apprentices were under the protection of the craft guild. The journeyman, like the apprentice, was a member of the master-workman's household. As soon as he married he was forced to set up his own household and become a master workman. The journeyman could freely choose his master, and whenever he was in need of anything the guild came to his assistance just as it assisted his master. When he married and set up his own house, the journeyman got his own shop also, took his place in the guild hall, and became a real citizen in every sense of the word. When he died, the insignia of his trade were placed upon his grave and prayers and masses were offered up for the repose

of his soul. If his family were not able to take care of themselves, the guild provided for them until they became self-supporting. The journeymen made as much money as the master workmen, because they had so much less to meet in the way of expenses, though their pay was smaller than that of master workmen. The journeymen were paid directly, not through the master, for work done for customers. In some townships they received equal wages with the masters. The monasteries had skilled foremen for nearly all trades. Plans were drawn and buildings erected by the monks themselves for the most part.

Deterioration and Decline

In the days of the decline of the guilds, journeymen were so numerous that they could not hope to become masters. They were then forced to form journeymen guilds for self-protection. They also ceased to be part of the master's family, and had to build homes for themselves. Ashley points out that these correspond to the working class of the present day. The deterioration of the master guilds had already commenced. The influx of the country population into the towns made matters worse. The craft guilds of these declining years were fast becoming exclusive. They raised all manner of restrictions for entrance into their guilds. Sometimes they made entrance hereditary. The leading families thus got a monopoly. Whole classes were thus excluded from entering into apprenticeship. These abuses crept in, of course, only when the influence of the Church was lessened and the principles of justice and charity which she preached were disregarded. The Reformation brought on the climax.

At Strasburg, which was for a time the center of this new religion of enlightenment and liberty, holidays were immediately cut off. Wages were lessened all around. In England, Cromwell cut off Christmas and Easter and other festivals as superstitious. The Golden Age of labor was coming to an end. Capitalism was tightening its tyrannical grip on the poor deluded masses. While labor was paid lower wages, it had to produce more work. It lost its privileges and rest days. In a word, a few idle rich were beginning to exploit the many hardworking poor. Marriages were postponed because laborers were not able to support a wife and family on their poor wages. The city council of Nürnberg issued a law that a certain class of journeymen were to observe "the fear of God and a fifteen-hour day." There was yet no drawn battle between capital and labor because there was some aftermath of Christianity left even after the Reformation began to take hold. It was only when the principles of religion were abandoned by the guilds themselves that society became truly capitalistic. Masters, journeymen and apprentices still worked side by side at the same benches as in the good old days.

The warm family spirit of home life was loath to leave forever and turn the labor world into a cold, inhospitable boarding house.

The disputes between journeymen and masters were first settled by arbitration boards formed by both sides, generally with a bishop or clergyman presiding. The old Church at this period, in those places where she was still free to exert her ancient influence, was with the journeymen in their struggle against the new order. Unions of journeymen were prohibited by law for fear that their combined strength might result in a rise in wages. We read of a friar preacher, who started to unionize the journeymen of London, thrown into prison in Newgate before his work was well started.

Protestant historians, in order to blacken and discount the good intentions of the Church in her fight for the poor workingman, say that she put forth all these efforts in order to increase her own influence. We suppose the Protestant Churches of this period went into partnership with capitalism in order to imitate the example of Him who said, "the poor you shall have always with you!" He did not send back the messengers to the Baptist, saying: "Tell him that the rich have the gospel preached to them." The Catholic Church was only following her Master's example in clinging to the poor and the oppressed. She cannot do otherwise without betraying Him who, when taken by Satan to the pinnacle of the temple, was offered all the kingdoms of the Earth if, falling down, He would adore him.

Labor Conditions

This is a brief resumé of labor conditions under the influence of the Catholic Church up to the advent of the Reformation. The period of the greatest development of industrial democracy was in the Middle Ages. Scholars are now everywhere lauding this period of Church history and are trying to educate the masses back to saner and truer conceptions of the nature of progress and civilization. The failure of the capitalistic system itself is one of the principal causes of this changed attitude of mind. When wealth and the instruments of production are concentrated in the hands of a few, the millions of our population are thereby deprived of any voice in the regulation of things that most vitally concern them.

Too many wealthy capitalists have made arbitrary use of their tremendous power until they have made the minds of men revolt against all the wrongs and injustices and abuses of the whole system. In their blind instincts after justice and right, the masses are threatening to take a short cut to an ideal order of things. Hence the spread among them of socialism and kindred doctrines which have such an attraction for the working man. These cures, of course, are worse than the disease.

So today all educated people are looking back again in admiration to the glorious period of history for five hundred years before the Reformation which the uneducated were taught to despise as dark and unprogressive. "Today the most earnest minds are looking to a revival of the guild system as the only alternative to a new servile state" (E. T. Raymond). Then, too, there is a reawakening of the real Catholic spirit in our own system of education because Catholic education itself can at times be largely dominated by worldly ideals. A crucifix on the wall or the Sign of the Cross before class cannot make a Reformation lie an historical fact.

The World War also, though ended in a mock peace, has disillusioned the masses and convinced them that no confidence can be placed on the promises of politicians. It has taught them also that the highest achievements of modern civilization were only leading on to this universal slaughter and destruction of everything Europe and the world inherited from Catholic times. Philosophically minded men saw clearly that the great catastrophe itself was a necessary result of Reformation teaching. "It has needed this war to drive men back and beyond the form to the matter itself, and to give them some realization of the singular force and potency and righteousness of an epoch which begins now to show itself as the best man has ever created, and one as well that contains within itself the solution of our manifold and tragical difficulties, and in fact the model whereupon we must rebuild the fabric of a destroyed culture and civilization." (*The Substance of Gothic*, R. A. Cram.)

Lane Cooper, writing in *The Nation*, June 17, 1919, declared "that the great productive scholars of the present day are mediaevalists." Apart from the art and architecture of these days, it is the social wisdom of the guild system that is making the greatest appeal to earnest thinkers who are determined that the evils of the present economic system must be remedied. "In order to justify the present age, it has become the custom of modernists to misrepresent the past. The consequence is that in the popular mind the Middle Ages have become synonymous with Feudalism, and even then, not Feudalism as it really existed – for in contrast with capitalism, Feudalism was a comparatively humane institution – but misrepresented out of all resemblance to the original." (*Old Worlds for New*, Arthur Penty, p. 49.) Authors wrote correctly on almost every other phase of history, but when the Church had to be reckoned with in the present or the past, then halftruths or whole falsehoods were mixed up in the mind of the poor pupil until he really believed that the ages of the most brilliant thought and magnificent achievement were as dark and ignorant as the prejudiced picture drawn for him.

No wonder, then, that we find even Catholics who are proud of the very things our civilization should be most ashamed of. We could fill pages of notes from modern writers, of recognized scholarship, who grow eloquent when discoursing on the Middle Ages and the rich heritage it has bequeathed us. If some are found

still ignorant of its glories, perhaps it is because it is too imperial a theme to stimulate the fancy of ragtime souls who are all too prone to believe smartness a substitute for education. We recommend it as the study of a lifetime, these five centuries of the Middle Ages, “wherein Christianity created for itself a world as nearly as possible made in its own image, a world that in spite of the wars and desecrations of Modernism, has left us monuments and records and traditions of a power and beauty and nobility without parallel in history.”

Article XXX

On Being Neither Radical Nor Reactionary, But a Catholic Traditionalist

In the foregoing articles we have tried to show the social and economic influence of Catholic teaching and Catholic life in the formation of Christendom. We have dwelt at length on this phase of the Church’s activity because we think there can be no understanding of social and industrial questions without some knowledge of their historical setting. From the brief survey given we see plainly that the Church has always been the best friend of the workingman. We have seen how the Church has always opposed economic theories that tended to enslave him. She freed the slave, the serf and the craftsman. We have seen also that the Church has a true social, as well as religious, message that cannot be ignored by mankind without mankind suffering the consequences. She has succeeded best in solving the greatest social problems where and when her influence was greatest.

There was hardly a time when better social and industrial relations were more needed than they are at present. This same Catholic teaching and life, we are confident, can restore and reconstruct a Christian civilization now equal to that which flourished in Europe from the fifth to the sixteenth century – the great thousand years of mediaevalism. The Church has been the great preserver of the good and true and noble things of every civilization in every age. Democratic ideals have always evoked a profound response within her bosom. Capital must be brought to understand the Christian spirit of our program, and labor must see in it its salvation.

To this end false notions of the Church’s teaching must be cleared away from the popular mind. Want of accurate knowledge and reliable literature pertaining to the historic background of social and economic questions is responsible for untold mischief.

A Popular Fiction

One of the fictions that retains its hold on the popular imagination is the assumption that Catholicism is the great pillar of capitalism. Nothing could be

farther removed from the objective truth. The origin of this misguided notion is a misunderstanding of a few fundamental ideas that are often confounded, though in themselves they be very distinct and opposed. “There is a vast difference between the system of rationalistic capitalism, by which we here understand the modern commercialism as it arose after the Reformation, and the mere fact of private ownership in the means of production. The former is antagonistic to the entire spirit of Christianity; the latter, in its broadest sense, has always existed, and always will continue to exist, despite Socialism and its exaggerated theories. By obliterating this distinction, radicalism has gained its hold upon many earnest minds.” (Husslein, S. J., *The World Problem*, page 55.)

It is this rationalistic capitalism with all its post-Reformation abuses that the Church has always combatted while she heartily desires not a lessening, but an increase of private ownership. This rationalistic capitalism has tried, and with success, to dominate the entire economic field, and to subordinate every interest to the one consideration of personal gain. Justice and charity and religion, it thinks, must give way before the more important considerations of profit, rent and interest.

“It may perhaps be objected that the inordinate amassing of riches was not unknown in the Middle Ages, which immediately preceded the capitalistic system, and that then, as now, men might be found who were ready to sacrifice charity, justice and religion itself for the sake of gain. This is perfectly true. But the essential point of distinction is that there was, then, no system of economics which sought to justify such a course, or which, like the pagan capitalism we have described, did not even deem a justification necessary. Its law was summed up in the materialistic motto: ‘Business is business,’ which means that the considerations of humanity and religion may have their proper time and place, but must not be allowed to interfere with the interests of personal gain.

“A man might grind and crush the poor, pay starvation wages to labor and exact starvation prices for his products, and yet stand justified by the principles of this system. He might, even if he chose, be crowned as a philanthropist and public benefactor, to satisfy his craving for publicity.

An Impossible Code

“Such a code of morality was impossible in the Middle Ages. It could never be tolerated while the Church exercised her power over the people . . . The oppression of labor, the exploitation of women and children, the destruction of family life, were all normal methods that never caused the lifting of an eyebrow. There was to be absolute freedom of competition and absolute liberty of personal contract between employer and employee, in order that the weaker competitors might be relentlessly crushed to the wall and the laborer might be hopelessly enslaved by the

powerful employer. Yet the men who practiced these enormities were not considered criminals, but gentlemen.” (Husslein, S. J., *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.)

Rationalistic Capitalism

Father Husslein goes on to say that our present system of rationalistic capitalism would have been impossible if the Church were free to exert her influence as she once had been. It would have rendered impossible the usurious profits exacted under the reign of commercialism. The spirit of co-operative organization so carefully fostered by the Church in the guild system would not have allowed the paralysis and destruction of labor organizations which was necessary to give free reign to the relentless and unscrupulous struggle for gain. “The Reformation, without any doubt, is mainly accountable for the form of capitalism here outlined . . . The new system of capitalism began by disregarding the sacred rights of the laborer to a reasonable family wage. It continued its work by the warfare of unrestricted competition in which all means were fair that might crush a weaker rival. It completed its task with the concentration of enormous fortunes in the hands of single individuals and the coalition of mighty interests that swept everything before them. It ended in the establishment of gigantic foundations to carry its domination from the economic sphere into every other field of human activity, seeking to control and monopolize charities, schools and municipal and national governments themselves. For this purpose it became the custom for leading capitalists to purchase or otherwise control their own papers that they might the more surely, though covertly, influence and control public opinion, elections, civic or national movements and enterprises, and so the entire life of the people.” (Husslein, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-42.)

Catholic and Socialistic Condemnation

The Catholic condemnation of such a system is not less severe than that of the socialist. We differ from the socialist in this: that we do not condemn capital itself. Capital is in itself indifferent and can and should be used for the moral and spiritual welfare of the world. So it was used under the direction of the Church in times past. By every means in our power we ought to combat this bad spirit, this anti-Christian spirit of rationalistic capitalism. The alternative is not an equally anti-Christian system of tyrannical and destructive communism, but the reconstructed collectivist state permeated by the Catholic principles of social justice and charity, where will reign the widest and most equitable distribution of private ownership.

This was the thought Newman had in mind when he wrote: “Were it my present purpose to attack the principles and the proceedings of the world, of course it would be obvious for me to retort upon the cold, cruel, selfish system which this supreme worship of comfort, decency and social order necessarily introduces; to show you how the many are sacrificed to the few, the poor to the wealthy, how an oligarchical monopoly of enjoyment is established far and wide, and the claims of want and pain and sorrow and affliction and guilt and misery are practically forgotten . . . We come to poor human nature as the angels of God, and you, as policemen.” (*Lectures on Certain Difficulties Felt by Anglicans*, page 209.)

Yes, the old Church of the poor was gone and the new clergy of the state Church had long since been secularized. It is the easiest thing in the world for a national establishment to develop into an institution for the upper classes. There is a mighty lesson to be learned by every clergy from Brentano’s description of Anglicanism as it existed for centuries after the Reformation. “Distinguished families looked upon her as a divine institution which existed in order to provide their younger sons with comfortable livings. Rich parvenus made use of her as a means whereby they could secure for their descendants recognition as gentlemen amongst the aristocracy.

“This state of things produced an amiable type of clergyman who was a hard rider to hounds, an expert carver of poultry at the dinner table, a great connoisseur of fine wines, always full of amusing stories and willing to sing a comic song: the kind that calls forth kindly smiles in so many English novels. But on closer acquaintance this gentleman, so agreeable in society, shows a more questionable side to his character. Generally astonishingly ignorant, even in theological matters he was full of narrow dogmatism, and the enemy of all spiritual and ecclesiastical progress in consequence of his time-service dependence on the richer classes; for he shared all their prejudices against the aspirations of the lower classes. Year in and year out he read sermons from musty manuscripts in which almost the only Bible texts quoted were those exhorting the congregation to dutiful submission to the existing order. The influence exercised by the state Church clergy was what might have been expected. Those among the upper classes who had an earnest desire for the truth, sought it in various directions, according to disposition; some lost themselves in the materialistic atmosphere of a scientific investigation which denied all Christian doctrine; others became Catholics or at least approached Catholicism.”

Oxford Movement

This was the kind of Church that drove the finest minds in England into the Oxford movement and finally into the Catholic Church. Ward could not believe

that a Church for the rich only could be the Church of Christ. The true Church has to hold before the world “a picture of Christian equality as an edifying example, and to assign an honorable position to the poor and helpless, regarding everything that hurts or lowers them as an offense against the Church and an outrage to the common sentiments of Christians.” (Ward, *Ideal*, page 31.) “Never,” he went on to say, “have the sufferings of the poor, even in the most corrupted Catholic times, been so great and withal, so disregarded as in post-Reformation times.’”

And as in the days of the first stirrings of the Oxford movement, men are today also asking better things from us. What would happen if the world knew the real teaching and principles of the Catholic Church? What if they understood the beauty and truth of her divine message? When the multitudes crowd around us asking for bread, let us beware of the curse that must fall on us for offering them a stone.

The call of the Catholic Church is to social action. Let us not be reactionary conservatives or liberal radicals. We are Catholic traditionalists.

CHAPTER IV

THE BAD ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE RELIGIOUS REVOLT OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Article XXXI

The Economic Effects of the Reformation

Our thesis all along is that there can be no solution of the political, industrial and social problems of modern times so long as moderns are satisfied that they can get along fairly well politically, industrially and socially without God. By that we mean that society, which is secular in so far as it will not have anything to do with religion in the management and regulation of its affairs, is bound to frustration in seeking to extricate itself from the evils social, industrial and political, which now afflict it.

Society, as such, must come back to God. The only way to do that is to come back to the religion that God gave the world to regulate its relations with God. God gave the world only one such religion. That religion is the Catholic religion. You hear so-called broad-minded Catholics (who hate all kinds of radicalism, such as collective bargaining! a living wage! the eight-hour day! etc., the fundamental teachings of Leo's great encyclical, the Magna Charta of labor), sometimes assert that Christianity is good enough for society, meaning by Christianity any or all of the heresies into which Protestantism has broken up, or down, since the Reformation of the 16th century rang down the curtain on the unity of Christendom and wrote *finis* to mediaeval civilization.

The only apparent reason for this attitude of mind is that any other is altogether un-American and foreign to the genius and spirit of our institutions! Perhaps we are not exaggerating if we say that this mental attitude today is the prevailing one among a certain well-defined class of half-Catholics, and to question it is to invite contempt for one's stand as narrow-minded, unpatriotic, socialistic, or any other

epithet that means anything or nothing in the mouths of those that use them, without giving a thought to their meaning or signification.

Some Points of Objection

But don't you see you must be tolerant? But what does toleration mean? Oh, well! who is going to argue with you if you go on like that? Why, of course, toleration means that one religion is as good as another, and to have no religion at all is the most intellectual and respectable attitude of all to adopt, and Catholicism is nearly as good as Protestantism! That's what the world thinks, and if we want to get along in this country we cannot afford to isolate ourselves intellectually from the thought (?) of our day. How can you be a good citizen if you are going to take any other stand? Perhaps the day will come when we can scrap all these fool religions and set up some good American brand instead, that will embrace all good red-blooded men, and call it, say, "frictionless citizenry." The people wouldn't have to think at all. Everybody could work hard, of course, as usual, and make good money, and a good lot of it, and everybody would own a Ford, and everything. I suppose you think you can put back the hands of the clock!

This sort of theological Babbity, of course, is below contempt, and every Catholic should be made to understand that it is not toleration or anything else. Toleration has only one correct meaning in theory or practice. It is that no one must be blamed or punished for being invincibly ignorant. Any other kind of ignorance is no accomplishment at all. It must be removed as soon as possible, like any other disease, mental, physical or moral. Every religion except the Catholic is either heresy or infidelity. That means there is only one that is true.

It is the duty of every Catholic to make that fact – for it is a fact – known to everybody. "And Jesus coming, spoke to them, saying: All power is given to Me in Heaven and in Earth. Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. (Mark XXVIII, 18-20.) And again: "And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice, and they shall be one fold and one shepherd." (John X, 16.)

Truth is a good thing for the world. The revealed truths of religion are the highest and best truths for the world. The Catholic Church was founded by God to teach these truths to the world forever, and infallibly. The world, even the American world, is bound to listen to the Church teaching these great saving truths. "And he said to them: Go ye into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not

shall be condemned.” (Mark XVI, 15-16.) That is simply our platform. There should be only one religion in the world. That religion should be the true one. There is only one true one. That is the one taught by the Catholic Church. We are all bound to preach that unity of faith in the bond of truth. “And there shall be one fold and one shepherd.” That is what Christendom meant. Therefore Christendom must be restored. It was a good thing for the world when it was thus. It will be a good thing for the world when it is so again. It will be very bad for the world until it is so.

Evil of Disunion

We have shown how it is economically good for the world and society to be united and permeated by one true religion. We shall try to show now how it was a very bad thing, economically, for the world and society to cut themselves adrift from this one true religion at the time of the Reformation. This Reformation was the root cause of all the big outstanding social, industrial and political evils that are tormenting the world today. This conquering of the materialistic, rationalistic and capitalistic age following the Reformation, this third restoration of Christendom, is the great work to be accomplished by the Catholic Church in the 20th century.

“The future historian, looking back over the course of the past centuries of Christianity, will be able to discern three great epochs. They will stand out like giant landmarks, each momentous in its importance for the destinies of the human race. The first will be the era of the Caesars and the triumph of the early Church. The second will be the period of the barbaric invasions of civilized Europe and the re-conquest of the world for Christ. The third we may regard as the age of materialism following upon the ‘Reformation.’ All three epochs are characterized alike by vast world conquests. Two of the periods have passed into history and can now be studied in their completeness. The third remains filled with vast possibilities for us.” (Husslein, S. J., *The Catholics’ Work in the World*, pp. 9-10.)

Church Victories

The first great victory of the Church was over the Roman Empire. It gave us the Church of the Fathers. The second one was over the tidal wave of barbarism that overthrew the Roman Empire. It gave us mediaeval Christendom. For a third time civilization is paganized. The world in its pride is delivered up to a reprobate sense, doing without the slightest remorse the things that are worthy of eternal death. All the instruments of human power and influence are aligned against the teachings of the Church of Christ, in the service of that world, the great secular carnal world, which the scriptures call the inveterate enemy of the children of God.

Governments, the press, the school, the university, the stage, the workshop, the bank, the corporation in business, all are operating as if Christianity never existed. Christ is overlooked, as if He never came down from Heaven to found His Church. The new idol of capitalistic materialism is set up in His stead. Paganism has almost won its third great victory in the last 2,000 years.

“Prepared for by the Reformation, out of which it arose, materialism long ago proclaimed its conquest of the world. Like the victories of the Caesars, and later like the resistless march of the legions of Thor, that triumph of materialism has only served to prove still more clearly the divine origin of the one true Catholic Church, whose unbroken line of Pontiffs, beginning with Peter, stretches on through the ages and shall continue to the end of time.

“She has now the same power to conquer the world for Christ which she possessed in the days of the apostles and in the ages of the barbarian invasions. It depends upon us to aid in advancing her banners, not for a political supremacy or a martial triumph, but for the spiritual conquest of the world.” (Husslein, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.)

Fiction Bred in the Bone

“For 300 years, generation after generation has been fed on the shameless fiction of historians and theologians until it is bred in the bone that the Reformation, the suppression of the monasteries, the Huguenot revolt, etc., were Godly acts that formed the everlasting corner stones of modern civilization. They were; but what that civilization was we are now finding out and paying for at a price never exacted before since Imperial Rome pftid in the same coin.” (Ralph Adams Cram, *The Sins of the Fathers*, page 96.)

As Muezzin wrote in the *London Athenaeum*, May 17, 1923, page 223: “Man in the Middle Ages somehow held the clue to a happiness and harmony that we have lost. Life had a meaning for him which transcended the desires of the flesh and the promptings of self-interest; his universe was charged with intelligible and blessed purpose; and his work, which was consecrated to the service of that meaning and that purpose, was crowned with such exuberance of joy and beauty that the cathedrals, abbeys and churches of his creation tease us moderns out of thought, so sublime they seem, so unattainable to the more accomplished, more learned craftsmen of today.”

Mediaeval and Modern Man

If that happiness and harmony of life of the Middle Ages is lost, we know the cause. The whole difference between mediaeval and modern times can be traced to

the equally opposed viewpoint of the mediaeval and modern man. "If we were to attempt to discover the essential difference between the two points of view, we should find that the modern point of view rests upon an individualist and rationalist basis, while the mediaeval rested upon a solidarist and dogmatic basis. In other words, whereas modern society is fundamentally scientific in its ideas, mediaeval society was fundamentally religious. 'The mediaeval man had an *idée fixe*, religion, which entered as a blend into all his thoughts, political, economic, scientific or artistic.' " (O'Brien, *An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation*, pp. 8-9.) Or, as Dr. Cunningham puts it, "During the Middle Ages human activities were dominated by religion, while in modern times political and economic life has been secularized . . . In the old days life had been treated as a whole; all institutions had religious as well as political aspects; but in the course of the two centuries the two sides fell apart, and life could be conveniently divided into sections." (*Christianity and Economic Science*, pages 3 and 76.)

"It follows that a society penetrated throughout, as mediaeval society was, by the ideas and teachings of a dogmatic religion, will continue essentially unchanged so long as no change occurs in the religion on which it is based. In order, therefore, to effect any far-reaching social change in such a society, it is necessary to attack the religion in which it is rooted; and conversely, any attack on the religion entails, as a necessary consequence, serious social and economic changes. When in the extreme case the attack on the old religion is directed against its very foundations, and when the old faith is shaken from top to bottom, the social and economic consequences are bound to be correspondingly deep and revolutionary. The religious movement known as the Reformation was essentially an attack of this kind. It aimed at subverting the basic foundation upon which the prevailing order rested, and at dismembering the whole edifice of existing belief and tradition. Can it be a matter of surprise that such a movement should have been accomplished by social and economic consequences of the gravest kind?" (*Economic Effects of the Reformation*, by George O'Brien, Litt. D., P. B. Hist. S., etc., pp. 9-10.)

Article XXXII

Why Protestantism is the Most Radical and Mortal of All Heresies

We do not suggest that all the evils of our day were foreseen as a result of their teaching by the early reformers of the sixteenth century. We might admit even that many of them desired the very opposite results from the preaching of Reformation doctrines and principles of belief and action. It matters little to us, however if these doctrines and principles contained all the seeds of the religious and social dissolution which we now see rampant in the modern world.

It could not be otherwise. Granting that there was a good deal of good faith then, as there is always in the minds of those who hold and propagate erroneous doctrines, that does not justify the holding or propagation of these philosophical or theological errors. "By their fruits you shall know them." Luther and the other reformers cannot escape responsibility from what they said, or did, because they failed to see the dire and bitter results of their philosophical and theological views, as they worked out in social and industrial practice long after the reformers had vanished from the scene. Once the principle of private judgment is made a rule of faith, the door is opened to every kind of extravagance in intellectual and moral tenets. Private judgment is in actual fact the fruitful parent of the most discordant and opposite heresies.

The Most Radical Heresy

That is the reason why Protestantism is the most radical and mortal of all heresies. Every heresy denies some doctrine or doctrines of Catholic teaching, but the essential note in Protestantism is that it denies Catholic teaching itself. Therefore, it is the rallying ground for all rebels against the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, and rationalists and free thinkers of every description find a common battle cry in its protest against any organic authority other than their own private opinions.

"A French writer in the middle of the last century compared Protestantism, after three centuries of disintegration and corruption, to a huge corpse which was still decomposing in a thousand new pestilential errors; and suggested that Luther's dying words: 'Pestis eram vivus, moriens ero mors tua, Papa!' might well be applied to the child of Luther's creation by the substitution of the word 'munde' for 'Papa.' 'Luther, a living plague, when dead will inflict a mortal wound on the Papacy, and wreck civilization,' may be a fairly accurate rendering of the Latin phrase. (*Economic Effects of the Reformation*, O'Brien, pp. 33-34.) The writer referred to was Nicolas in his work, *Du Protestantisme et de toutes le Heresies dans leurs Rapports avec le Socialisme*. Balmes summed up the case against Protestantism very succinctly when he wrote: 'It is vain for man to struggle against the nature of things; Protestantism endeavored without success to limit the rights of private judgment. It raised its voice against it, and sometimes appeared to attempt its total destruction; but the right of private judgment, which was in its own bosom, remained there, developed itself, and acted there in spite of it.'

No Middle Course for Protestantism

“ ‘There was no middle course for Protestantism to adopt; it was compelled either to throw itself into the arms of authority, and thus acknowledge itself in the wrong, or else allow the developing principle to exert as much influence on its various sects as to destroy even the religion of Christ, and debase Christianity to the rank of a school of philosophy. . . . The only way which Protestantism has of preserving itself is to violate as much as possible of its own fundamental principle.’ ” (*Protestantism and Catholicity Compared*, Balmez, pp. 17, 35.)

Leo XIII, in his Encyclical on the study of the philosophy of that intellectual prince of mediaevalists, St. Thomas Aquinas, taught that all the public and private evils now overwhelming society could be traced back to evil teaching about things human and divine: “If anyone look carefully at the bitterness of our times, and if, further, he considers earnestly the causes of those things that are done in public and in private, he will discover with certainty the fruitful root of the evils which are now overwhelming us, and of the evils which we greatly fear. The cause he will find to consist in this – evil teaching about things human and divine has come forth from the schools of philosophers; it has crept into all the orders of the state; and it has been received with the common applause of very many. Now, it has been implanted in man by nature to follow reason as the guide of his actions, and, therefore, if the understanding go wrong in anything, the will easily follows. Hence it comes about that wicked opinions, whose seat is in the understanding, flow into human actions and make them bad. On the other hand, if the mind of man be healthy and strongly grounded in solid and true principles, it will assuredly be the source of great blessings, both as regards the good of individuals and as regards the common weal.” (Leo XIII, Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, 1879.)

Effects on Catholicism

These truths are so obvious that we would not waste time repeating them if all the bad effects of Reformation principles were confined to Protestants or Protestant countries alone. It is a very sad historical fact that the power for good of Catholicism as a social and civilizing force was and is seriously weakened by the contacts of individual Catholics with men and women and institutions imbued with these perverted principles which Pope Leo rightly blamed as being “the fruitful root of the evils which are now overwhelming us, and of the evils which we greatly fear.”

The age of private opinion preceded that of free thought, and free thought ushered in that of superficial thought, or no thought at all. False convention now is our great intellectual bogey. Public opinion and the characteristics of modern

thought hold us spell bound. These Baconian idols are adored most punctiliously by that class which suffers most from the prevailing passivity of thought which has been brought about by the spread of newspapers, periodicals, and cheap trashy literature. There are people who would consider it intellectual suicide to believe in an infallible church but who receive without questioning the views and impressions they obtain from their favorite newspaper or magazine. Hence at present the majority of the people are at the mercy of every shallow sophist who propagates his prejudices with a ready pen or a glib tongue.

The masses are supposed to be better educated than ever before. That is true only if by education you mean knowledge of a certain sort that is daily growing more superficial. Even the opinions held thus superficially, few are able to defend if assailed by even the most specious arguments. And, again, people that ought to know better and sometimes do know better, seem to make a virtue of a weak compromising expediency in their attitude towards very important and vitally essential phases of current public opinion. They seem to be afraid to row up stream. We fear becoming unpopular if we attack openly and firmly what we are convinced are social or industrial cancers eating out slowly the vitals of even Catholic life in the communities where we happen to live. Leaders of thought will abdicate their God-given right to teach what their better judgment must dictate as the only proper course. They seem to lack a practical sense of their responsibility which binds them gravely to map out the road along which public opinion should be rightly directed.

This is not always, of course, so very obvious. Discussion and study may be and are nearly always in order. But the main lines are pretty well defined even though there may be room for controversy about the working out of details. There should never be any room, of course, among Catholic leaders or molders of public opinion for the charlatan or intellectual mountebank who jumps at every opportunity to adopt every dangerous whim of popular caprice, and endeavors to propagate them among his fellows in order to pose as an original thinker, and thus win the worthless applause of the unthinking herd who, for lack of critically developed minds, are unable to discern between the clever quack and the sober, trained, discriminating expert.

Such a man is as criminally guilty for the consequences of his acts as the man who would deliberately strive to spread smallpox germs among his neighbors, or in a period of national emergency betray his country into the hands of its foreign enemies. How many nowadays seem to have lost this high sense of personal and social responsibility, if we are to judge from their love of peddling, in the name of Catholic teaching, empty platitudes, hoary with the years in which they have done service in feeding the vanity of multitudes, who are never too willing to undertake those processes of cerebration, that might be cultivated so as to love the abstract,

and difficult ways of high and lofty thinking, and right, noble, and generous action following after.

Opinion and Judgment

Besides this weak catering to perverted popular public opinion, how often also do we not experience the dire results of expressions of opinion coming from judgments vitiated by want of duly regulated mental discipline? Opinions that could be reversed by an appeal to the objective facts are thrown out as gospel when they are in reality based on ignorant prejudice and passion.

Prejudices that consist in the formation of opinions before the subject has been really examined, or examined in only a superficial manner, misdirect the attention and bias the judgment, and ultimately so pervert the moral character of individuals, as to render them almost unconscious of any guilt in the wilfulness of their expressions of opinion. These prejudices finally intrinsically damage a man's very power to know the truth. Really, in the interest of intellectual honesty and moral veracity, such individuals do not always merit the gentlemanly forbearance that suggests at least the charity of silence in the presence of provoking shallowness, posing as ponderous and final dogmatism.

Perverting Passion

The same observation applies to passion as a perverting ingredient in our mental makeup. It is equally deadly if allowed to play fast and loose with the great principle of moral rectitude. A man has no right, just because he is living in a free country and is not put to jail for so acting, to form his opinions in any manner he pleases. Truth is as immutable and eternal and its laws are as binding on those who enjoy all the blessings of democracy under the stars of the twentieth century as on the poor, benighted folk who lived in that far-off century that produced only a Dante or an Aquinas! We should approach our enquiries with a sincere desire to discover the truth and with a mind free from the distortions of emotions and feelings that cloud the issue by coloring the facts and obscuring the evidence. How can the frivolous enquirer hope for any other than a misleading conclusion while, in prosecuting his examination, his highest concern has been to delude and to falsify?

Father Ross, in his textbook of right living, has this very pertinent remark about the opposition that is given to truth when it apparently conflicts with personal interest: "Again, personal interest frequently inclines to the maintenance of old policies and ideas. That inclination is apt to blind the keenest intellects. Those who have privileges, whether monetary or of honor, wish to keep them. Truth may

interfere and therefore they are prejudiced against truth. The masses resist truth, because it means the acquirements of new habits of thought, new ways of looking at things.

“Few men can accept new ideas after they are forty, not from intellectual dishonesty, but from a natural inability. All these reasons combine to make the acceptance of a new truth a slow process, and its preaching a painful road to glory. Society has always rewarded its greatest heroes with martyrdom. Those canonized today were persecuted during their lives. A prophet is without honor in his own country.” (Ross, *Christian Ethics*, pp. 155-156.)

But the most fatal of all the legacies of Reformation theology and one which also has affected deeply Catholic practice is the belief that the Church as an institution should concern itself exclusively with the religious life of its members. What business has the Church meddling with social and industrial questions? asks even the Catholic business man and even sometimes the ecclesiastic. “In order fully to realize the essential change which the Reformation wrought in the attitude of Christians towards ethical – and hence towards economic affairs, we must remember that side by side with the appearance of the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and partly in consequence of it, there grew up the new conception of the Church as an institution concerned exclusively with the religious life of its members. The mediaeval Church had claimed to dogmatize on moral as well as on purely theological matters, and its teaching, therefore, penetrated into every department of private and public life. Anything resembling the modern notion that religion should be confined to Sundays, and should not be allowed to interfere with a man’s business or pleasure on the other days of the week, was utterly foreign to the mediaeval mind. Every activity of man, on the contrary, was seen to be capable of being regarded from an ethical standpoint and of being followed by ethical consequences; and every department of ethics was conceived as being intimately bound up with man’s spiritual life, and therefore liable to be received and regulated by the supreme spiritual authority. In a very real sense the Christian Church – which, it must be remembered, included the sufferers in Purgatory and the saints in Heaven as well as the citizens of this world – was regarded as being a city of God; and the whole course of man’s existence, which was in no sense understood to finish at death, was conceived of as something which must be directed and guided by the teaching of the Church. It is easily understood how a community so conceived should come to be impressed with a deeply religious stamp.” (*An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation*, O’Brien, pp. 42-43.) How many of these pale and seemingly pious conservative platitudes so often uttered with tridentive finality in the sacred name of religion could be traced to the same polluted heretical fountain head?

Article XXXIII

The Anti-Social Abuses of Capitalism are the Direct Result of the Reformation's Philosophical and Theological Teaching

Probably the most shocking truth that certain Catholics do not care to hear, and that is anathema to the ears of the modern self-made big captain of industry, soap king or railroad king, or rubber king, or oil king, or other scion of this new moneyed royalty, is that capitalism, as we know it with all its anti-social abuses, is a direct result of false Reformation teaching. The other great social menace of modern times, Socialism or communism, which is a reaction against the abuses of capitalism, is equally a result of the same Reformation doctrines. We shall deal with capitalism first. It is hard to define it in a few words, just as it is hard to define Socialism. Perhaps a descriptive definition of capitalism will give us a better and more accurate concept than any shorter or more concrete formula.

What Is Historic Capitalism?

Capitalism, as we know it historically, is the economic system which grew out of the Reformation at a period when the social principles of the Church had ceased to influence industrial and commercial life. It stood in complete opposition to the traditional economic system of Catholic times, which had preceded it, and indeed to all the social ideals of the Church.

Both capitalism and the Church favored, in general, the private ownership of productive property. The essential difference was that whereas the Church desired the ownership to be shared by as many of the workers as possible, capitalism tended to wrest it from them entirely and concentrate it in the hands of a few who formed a moneyed class apart from the manual workers.

A policy of non-interference in industrial and commercial matters, both on the part of the state and of private organizations, was the first demand of the new capitalistic system which now arose. Hence the name of *laissez faire*. The only right and duty ascribed to the state by this false economic theory was the enforcement of all legal contracts, however much at variance they might be with justice and the natural law. Under such provision the legal suppression of all labor unions was successfully carried out. Without protection of law or guild, the weak were relentlessly delivered over to the merciless exploitation of the strong, and the state became a police force to keep the laborer in subjection.

The second feature of this system was the almost exclusive domination of money-capital in the economic field. Labor lost not merely its participation in ownership, but also in the control and management of the means of production on which its livelihood depended. Money ruled the world.

The third feature followed from the former two. It was the subordination of all other considerations to the unrestricted accumulation of personal gain. A man guilty of Heaven-crying sins; of the crime of withholding a just wage from his employees, prevented from exercising their right of collective bargaining; of the heartless oppression of women and children, enslaved under the most unnatural working conditions; of the unregarded death of hapless toilers, made the victims of easily avoidable accidents or industrial diseases, where a comparatively slight financial outlay might have saved the health and life of many, was none the less honored for his wealth as an unblemished gentleman by a society deprived of its Catholic teachings and traditions.

Evils of Monopoly

Conscientious employers, needless to say, suffered hardly less than the workers themselves. They were obliged to meet, as best they could, the conditions of an un-Christian competition, imposed on them by this pagan system, or else face bankruptcy and ruin.

The “evils of monopoly,” consisting in an artificial raising of prices, limitation of output and a deterioration in quality, were at times morally on a level with confiscation and the practice of sabotage. Wealth sought purely for its own sake, wealth acquired without a thought of the common good, wealth spent as if it gave its owner a right to any luxury that it can purchase, is a public scandal. Wealth means public responsibility, means stewardship in the name of God. If understood in any other sense, it is a public evil. No wonder, then, that the vices of an un-Christian capitalism in turn demoralized labor. What wonder if the latter was affected by the same principles and entertained the same selfish desires? The lesson taught it by too many of our immense corporations, our men of business and dames of leisure, was that there is nothing in life worth while except wealth and pleasure. Under such conditions even the increase in wages cannot create a true contentment. The spirit itself of such a doctrine must first give way to that other spirit which is of Christ.” (*Work, Wealth and Wages*, Joseph Husslein, S. J., pp. 61, 64.)

The learned Jesuit has not overdrawn his indictment of capitalism. It remains to explain how this sort of political and economic practice was the result of Reformation theory. Such conduct could not be conceived of when there did not exist the same rigid line of cleavage between Church and state, between spiritual and temporal things, as is taken for granted in modern times.

Human Interests and Religion

The mediaeval Church had asserted again and again that there was no human interest that could claim to be foreign to the province of religion. The essence of its moral teaching was to proclaim a rule of right according to which every aspect of human conduct should be judged. This supreme rule of right was preached not merely as an ideal to be contemplated in theory and ignored in practice, but a law that was to be enforced as a practical obligation upon every member of the community. It judged the soldier and the statesman by a standard superior to compromising political expediency. The contracts of business and all the transactions of economic life fell within the scope of the application of this moral code to concrete cases. This gave us the great body of Catholic casuistry which is nothing else than the regulation of the details of private and public life so that there may be complete harmony between human action and the moral precepts of the Gospel and natural law.

Then came the reformers with their separation of spiritual and temporal, of Christian and secular life. The Church would permeate every political and social institution with its own spirit of religious thought. But now there arose a new teaching which worked in the direction of the complete independence of the secular state. In the new religion fiduciary faith alone sufficed. A belief that Christ has already saved us without any need of our co-operation made good works on our part superfluous. Man's moral faculties were minimized to the extent that there was no place left in the economy of salvation for good works or effective charity expressed in deeds of justice and mercy toward the neighbor. Faith and morality were completely divorced.

The Lutheran dictum, *pecca fortiter sed credo fortius*, "sin stoutly but believe more firmly," certainly tended to lower respect for the moral law. No matter what the early reformers wanted people to do, this theory of religion asserted a wide separation between faith and morals, and tended to weaken and ultimately destroy the ethical side of Christian and social life. Ever since the Reformation the breach between the religious and social sphere has been widening. That is exactly the root reason why the average man today, and the uneducated Catholic is no exception to the rule, will tell you that the Church has no right to interfere in the direction of the political, economic, industrial or social life of the nation, as if all these phases of man's life were altogether outside the operation of moral obligations or restraints of any kind.

Authority and Sanctions

Then again the old Church of the Middle Ages did not stop at preaching and teaching abstract moral doctrines embracing every human activity of man's public and private life. It was the infallible guide in faith and morals, and not only that, but it also claimed the right to enforce its precepts under strong spiritual sanctions. The new religion, which proclaimed the right to abolish all organic authority in religion, and to set up in its stead the supremacy of private judgment, could not consistently enforce respect even for its own precepts.

A Protestant preacher could not teach like to one sent and having authority, for he was the accredited agent of no infallible authority. He had no claim on the attention of his audience beyond what he might derive from his own private life, his piety, his eloquence, or his education. There could be no compulsion used to enforce obedience for the sake of the ethical code promulgated beyond the preacher's capacity to convince his listeners, whom he must have known, as good Protestants, to be at perfect liberty to reject or contradict all that he stated, in so far as it may run counter to their own private judgment, no matter how much that judgment may be influenced by prejudice or passion in arriving at its own conclusions.

Apart altogether from public sanctions, the old Church had one great institution that probably did more than any other single force to restrain and control the industrial and commercial transactions of economic and social life, and directed ethical relations along the channels marked out by the moral law, natural and divine. That institution with auricular confession, the sacrament of penance, had to do from the nature of things with individual conduct and behavior, but in doing this through individuals it affected the general social life of the community made up of individual units so regulated in their private capacities as moral agents.

Was there an avaricious merchant, was there a fraudulent dealer in wares of any description, was there an oppressor of labor or the poor, was there a corrupt civil servant, was there an unjust or tyrannical ruler, if there was, sooner or later he had to present himself before this awful tribunal where God was the Judge of his conduct and he himself the faithful witness of his own moral delinquency. Sorrow for the past was not sufficient to obtain pardon. Restitution for wrongs and injustices was prescribed under pressure of the most terrible sanctions.

How can we adequately measure the social importance of such an institution as the holy tribunal of penance acting on a well instructed conscience trained from infancy to respect the slightest details of the moral code, how can society ever measure the social loss it suffered in its abolition by the Protestant Reformation? To preach the Gospel is but half the duty of Christian teachers. There must be an

institution to preserve the purity of Christian teaching by its absolute power to bind and loose in the name of the author of the moral law.

The Reformation, in attacking the unity and integrity of the Church, undermined also the foundation of that strong moral power which held in check the selfish avarice and ambition of men and gave free rein to individual greed and self-interest which was alike indifferent to the welfare of the community in which they were a part, and the dictates of the moral law itself.

“The best way to feel the inferiority of Protestantism with respect to the knowledge and comprehension of the means proper to extend and to strengthen morality, and to make it present in all the acts of life, is to observe that it has interrupted all communications between the conscience of the faithful and the direction of the priest; it only leaves to the latter a general direction which, owing to its being extended over all at the same time, is exerted with effect over none. If we confine ourselves to the consideration of the abolition of the sacrament of penance among Protestants, we may rest assured that they have thereby given up one of the most legitimate, powerful, and gentle means of rendering human conduct conformable to the principles of sound morality.” (Balmes, *Catholicity and Protestantism*, comp. page 129.)

Another writer says: “We must not forget how mighty a weapon the Catholic Church possessed in the confessional. The Lateran council of 1215 had imposed it as a duty on the faithful to go to confession at least once a year. It is not difficult to perceive how the soul and will-power could be influenced, and consequently the life of the individual. We must suppose that the business man discussed with his father confessor the principles that governed his economic activities. Do we not know that numerous treatises were written, advising the clergy how to guide their flocks in all that affected life, even to the minutest detail? Economic activities were naturally also considered, and rules were laid down for their regulation and direction.” (Sombart, *Quintessence of Capitalism*, p. 230.)

Article XXXIV

Errors in Doctrine Inevitably Flow into Errors in Practical Morals

Errors in doctrine must sooner or later flow into actions, or errors in practical morals. We need not go outside the writings of Luther himself for evidence to prove that Reformation doctrines soon had issue in widespread moral deterioration. Denifle quotes him thus: “Our people are seven times more scandalous than others have ever been up to this. We steal, we lie, we deceive, we eat and drink to excess and we give ourselves to every vice . . . We Germans are today the laughing-stock and the disgrace of all peoples; we are regarded as ignominious and obscene swine.” (Denifle, *Luther et Lutheranisme*, Vol. III., p. 79.) “We now see the people

becoming more infamous, more avaricious, more merciless, more unchaste, and in every way worse than they were under the papacy . . . That we are now so lazy and cold in the performance of good works is due to our no longer regarding them as a means of justification. We teach that we attain to God's grace without any works on our part. Hence it comes that we are so listless in doing good." (Grisar, *Luther*, Vol. IV, pp. 210-212.)

What was true of Germany was true also of their Teutonic cousins, the English, especially after the reign of Edward VI. A modern English Protestant historian writes in this connection: "In the hands of men more logical, or of a less healthy moral fibre, Luther's dogma of justification by faith alone led to conclusions subversive of all morality. However this may be, enemies and friends alike have to admit that the immediate effects of the Reformation were a dissolution of morals, a careless neglect of education and learning, and a general relaxation of the restraints of religion.

"In passage after passage Luther himself declared that the last state of things was worse than the first; that vice of every kind had increased since the Reformation; that the nobles were more greedy, the burghers more avaricious, the peasants more brutal; that Christian charity and liberality had almost ceased to flow." (Berens, *The Digger Movement*, pp. 10-11, quoted in *Economic Effects of the Reformation*.)

Tendency of the Reformation

From these quotations we see that the tendency of the Reformation was to lower the moral tone of society generally. This weakening of respect for morality naturally reacted on the ethical nature of economic teaching. Christian solidarity could not be shaken without affecting the corporate conception of man's economic relation with society. Every individual was sufficient unto himself, for justification came by faith alone. The motives that actuated the mediaeval Christian in his good works of mortification, and charity, had no place in the new theory of salvation. The destruction of monastic life struck at the two particular kinds of good works that left their stamp on the effective charity of the Middle Ages, viz., monastic vows and almsgiving.

Therefore no story of the economic effects of the Reformation would be complete without an account of the suppression of all the monasteries under Henry VIII. Moved, he tells us, with a desire "to purge the Church from the thorns of vices and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue," Henry, the most immoral and covetous king that England has ever known, decreed towards the end of 1534 to take active steps in order to secure the suppression of the religious houses.

The dissolution of the monasteries at the Reformation in England had the most far-reaching economic results. This great institution of monasteries, through the vow of celibacy, set aside a whole class of men and women who were free to devote their whole lives to religious and social duties unhampered by worldly cares and the ties of family. Their voluntary poverty they regarded not as a disgrace, but as a badge of holiness. These abodes of holiness and learning covered the countries from end to end of Christendom, and cared for every variety of poverty and suffering. The private resources of these Catholic establishments were supplemented by the alms of patrons of learning and religion. Therefore the attack on these ecclesiastical foundations deprived the poor of relief and made almsgiving odious by the introduction of the modern system of public relief of the poor and the destitute.

The Visitors and Their Methods

Visitatorial powers were conferred on the crown by the Supreme Head act of the year 1534. Henry appointed for this purpose an absolutely unscrupulous minister named Thomas Cromwell, worthy in every way of his lord and king. He never lost an opportunity of obtaining bribes in money, goods, leases, or estates. The visitation began in August, 1535, and extended to February, 1536. Cromwell had three agents as notorious as himself, Legh, Layton and London. During their tour they had managed to frighten some houses into making "voluntary surrenders." As Legh writes to Cromwell: "By these ye see that they shall not need to be put forth, but that they will make instance themselves, so that their doing shall be imputed to themselves and no other."

In March, 1536, a bill for the dissolution of the smaller houses, whose income was less than two hundred pounds a year, was forced through the parliament by royal threats. "I hear that my bill will not pass, but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads." About four hundred houses fell. The superiors received pensions and the monks obtained permission to join the larger houses, notwithstanding all the depravity told of them in the *Comperta*.

So hateful was this royal act of robbery to the majority of the English people that it caused the "Pilgrimage of Grace" which brought about the execution of twelve abbots, as well as many monks and laymen of all ranks. There had to be a reason of course for this legal pillage. An Anglo-Saxon always likes to rob, but only on a high moral plane. Moral reasons for an immoral act is called propaganda. They were found in the infamous *Comperta*, "a pestiferous document of unrivaled mendacity and malignity, which for three and a half centuries surrounded the memory of the latter days of the English religious with a miasma of noxious effluvia." It contained every evil thing that could justify the action of the king's

agents. Like many another piece of Reformation history, the falsity of most of its statements has been manifested beyond gainsaying. The cool judgment of scholars like Dr. Gairdner, who edited the official letters and papers of Henry VIII's reign, killed for ever any reliance that might be placed on the *Comperta* documents.

Abbott, now Cardinal, Gasquet has further exposed their worthlessness. Even Anglicans such as Canon Dixon and Dr. Jessopp have denounced the authors of these calumnies with no ordinary severity. "In short, it would not be possible for anyone of a decently balanced mind – we care not whether he is English Catholic, of the Roman obedience, non-conformist or agnostic – to make a careful documentary study of the times of the suppression of the monasteries of this country, without rising from the task with a feeling of almost unqualified disgust for the actual visitors, and of indignation with a king and a minister who could use such miscreants as their tools." (*English Monasteries*, chapter by "P. S. A.," an Anglican antiquary.)

"When the inquisitors of Henry VIII and his vicar-general, Cromwell, went on their tours of visitation, they were men who had no experience of the ordinary forms of inquiry which had hitherto been in use. They called themselves 'visitors'; they were, in effect, mere hired detectives of the very vilest stamp, who came to levy blackmail, and, if possible, to find some excuse for their robberies by villifying their victims. In all the *Comperta* which has come down to us, there is not, if I remember rightly, a single instance of any report or complaint having been made to the "visitors" from anyone outside. The enormities set down against the poor people accused of them are said to have been confessed by themselves against themselves. In other words, the *Comperta* of 1535-36 can only be received as the horrible inventions of the miserable men who wrote them down upon their papers, well knowing that, as in no case could the charges be supported, so, on the other hand, in no case could they be met, or were the accused even intended to be put upon their trial." (Dr. Jessopp, *Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich*, introduction, pp. xi, xii.)

The Stamp of Malignant Falsehood

Elsewhere criticising Legh's reports on the Papist houses, Dr. Jessopp comments as follows: "This loathsome return bears the stamp of malignant falsehood upon every line, and it could only have been penned by a man of blasted character and of so filthy an imagination that no judge or jury would have believed him on his oath." Thus does Dr. Jessopp speak, a scholar of first rank, who in his early days had his mind poisoned by the current stories about the immoral lives of the monks and nuns; a man who only surrendered his prejudicial views inch by inch under the stern pressure of historic facts.

The *Comperta*, or abstract of minutes drawn up by these corrupt royal visitors, are concerned for the most part with questions of morality. The offenders are listed and the charges against them, though these charges are absolutely unsupported by the slightest shadow of legal evidence, except that it is stated these odious sins are voluntarily confessed by the culprits!

But that was enough for the chaste Henry VIII, Defender of the Faith! And yet how many uneducated Protestants do we not find even to this day who are inclined to believe and act against our sisterhoods consecrated to lives of mercy and charity, in the name of 100 per cent Americanism, on no other evidence save the memory of the filth written in the *Comperta* and still peddled as reliable history of these terrible monks and nuns of mediaeval England!

Character of the Reforming Visitors

What manner of men, what was the private life, of these 16th century convent inspectors who set out to “purge the English Church from the thorns of vices, and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue”? There is not much need of describing Henry himself, “the professional widower,” whose life has been well summed up as “a spot of blood and grease on the pages of English history.” His vicar-general, Cromwell, was a man steeped in peculation, a giver and receiver of bribes. He had a price for everything, big and little. He died a well-merited death on the scaffold for selling offices and grants “for manyfold sums of money.” Layton, a man of cringing servility, with all the mean vices that go with weak, servile cringing to vicious, powerful masters, was just as expert as Cromwell in obtaining and extorting bribes. He never stopped short of sacrificing truth to please his masters. He found this a way to ecclesiastical preferment, even to the deanery of York, whose cathedral plate he pawned for his private purposes.

Legh was even worse than Layton. He extorted heavy fines which he passed systematically to his private account. He traveled in great state, surrounded by “rufflers and serving men.” He bullied and browbeat superiors. He abused mercilessly certain abbotts who failed to meet him at the gates even when they were entirely ignorant of his visit. Like Layton, he was rewarded for his holy zeal for the purity of religion by being made master of the Hospital of Sherburn, County Durham. A commission of inquiry in 1557 declared that the pious Legh had disgracefully abused his official trust “to the utter disinherittance, decay and destruction of the ancient and godly foundation of the same house.”

Dr. London, the third of this infamous trio, surpassed in iniquity his two colleagues. He was Canon of Windsor, dean of Osney, dean of Wallingford, and for 16 years warden of New College. He distinguished himself as a visitor of convents of nuns, an office that ill-suited one so notorious for the coarseness of his

life. He was the man whom Archbishop Cranmer describes as “a stout and filthy prebendary of Windsor. He was put to open penance for double adultery with a mother and daughter. He was convicted of perjury and committed to Fleet prison, where he died in 1543.”

And these were the men who were to purge the Church from the thorns of vices and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue! These were the authors of the “Great Pillage,” the ring of the miscreant who robbed the monasteries of England in the reign of Henry VIII, and the forerunners of the robbers of the poor and helpless in the reign of Edward VI. Under such auspices was begun the closing of the monasteries, the havens of all human misery, the open inns of God’s blessed poor.

They burnt the homes of the shaven men, that had been quaint and kind,
Till there was no bed in a monk’s house, nor food that man could find.
The inns of God, where no man paid, that were the walls of the weak,
The king’s servants ate them all, and still we did not speak!

– Chesterton.

On the soils of these religious houses was laid the foundation of many of the lordly fortunes of modern England. It was this patrimony of the poor that by a strange paradox was used to finance the beginnings of the industrial revolution that gave us historic capitalism and completely dispossessed nineteen-twentieths of England’s population. Behold! how much we are indebted to Henry and Cromwell, Legh, Layton and London, and the grand and glorious Reformation!

Article XXXV

Cromwell’s Comperta a Fountain Head of Nearly All Modern Calumnies Against the Church

“Give a lie a start of five minutes and it will not be overtaken in a year,” was never so truly confirmed as in the case of the *Comperta*. In the spring of 1536, a few months after Cromwell’s agents had made up the report of their visitation, the king issued a commission to report on the professed inmates and especially on the “conversation of their lives.” Each district had a board of investigation made up of six commissioners, an auditor, the receiver for each county, and a clerk, while the crown appointed the remainder of the board of inquiry. How did the reports of the second body of investigation compare with the first, who were the tools of Cromwell and Henry?”

The suppression of houses whose income was less than £200 was resolved on already when the second investigation was taking place. The inmates of the very

same houses about which Cromwell's agents had written so much filth were now said to be "of good and virtuous conversation." The second report was so favorable that Dr. Gairdner remarks: "The country gentlemen who sat on the commission somehow came to a very different conclusion from that of Drs. Layton and Legh."

Reports Discovered

Some years after Dr. Gairdner had written the above, Dr. Gasquet discovered the reports of the mixed commission relative to the houses of Gloucestershire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Hampshire and Wilts. The following were the general remarks about the religious houses visited: Such and such an abbey, "of good conversation," "of good religious conversation," "of honest conversation," "of convenient conversation," "of very good name and fame," "of virtuous living." There were of course individual lapses, and these were duly recorded.

It was mentioned also of what great benefit the houses visited were to the poor and destitute of the surrounding country, and on this account the commissioners occasionally begged that these charitable institutions would be allowed to continue in their mission of charity. Those in power themselves believed that the second report was more veracious than the first because we find that several superiors who were accused of criminal offences by the reports of Cromwell's visitors were given high offices afterwards in the Church when they were secularized.

A case in point is the conduct of Henry towards the abbot and monks of Chertsey abbey. Legh, who visited the house on September 29th, 1535, reported that of the fourteen monks who make up the community, seven were incontinent, four guilty of unnatural sin, and two apostate. Two years later Henry was establishing the monastery of the Holy Trinity, Bisham, which would consist of an abbot and thirteen monks whose business it would be to pray for the King and Queen Jane. Whom did Henry pick for this new foundation? None other than the abbot of Chertsey and his entire community. These were the very men whom Legh reported as being the foulest set of monks he had discovered anywhere. Still the lies of Henry's first visitors had served their purpose, and they serve it to this day.

People that want to believe evil things about the monks and nuns of Henry's time will go on doing so, especially if it justifies their prejudices against the monks and nuns of our own day, and all because of these lying calumnies, going back to the original *Comperta* of 1535-1536. Fair-minded scholars will prefer the statements of men like Canon Dixon, who wrote: "I am inclined to believe that in the reign of Henry VIII, the monasteries were not worse, but better, than they had been previously, and that they were doing fairly the work for which they had been founded."

The Reformation Animus in England

In Germany the Reformation may have been primarily a religious and popular movement, but in England the movement was artificially promoted to bolster up the plans, political and economic, initiated by the crown. The old feudal nobility who might have resisted Henry were for the most part destroyed in the Wars of the Roses. Their place was now taken by a new nobility which Henry raised out of the commercial middle class. They were in great part a class of sycophants who enriched themselves by continual speculation. It was the beginning of covetousness and fraud in high places, and the foundation was laid of that popular distrust of the new nobility, which in many countries has grown into an established tradition, which identifies the governing class with exploitation of the governed. But Henry was out for plunder and, as Cobbett observes, “when men have power to commit, and are resolved to commit acts of injustice, they are never at a loss for pretenses.”

Henry confiscated the property of the smaller monasteries and went on to seize that of the larger houses. When opposition was encountered the leaders were executed for high treason. Here and there open rebellion broke out, but since nearly every one of consequence was either receiving, or expecting to receive some of the spoils, the poor common people were deprived of their natural leaders and their uprisings came to naught.

“Merrie England” in the Middle Ages

During the Middle Ages, England had perhaps been the most prosperous and contented country in Christendom. It was “Merrie England.” The monasteries were full of treasures, of gold and silver ornaments, and still all these things remained untouched notwithstanding the fact that there was no standing army of police.

But in order “to purge the Church from the thorns of vices and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue,” “the ruffians of Cromwell entered the convents; they tore down the altars to get away the gold and silver, ransacked the chests and drawers of the monks and nuns, tore off the covers of the books that were ornamented with the precious metals. These books were all in manuscript. Single books that had taken half a long life-time to compose and to copy out fair; whole libraries, the getting of which together had taken ages and ages and had cost immense sums of money, were scattered abroad by these hellish ruffians when they had robbed the covers of their rich ornaments. The ready money in the convents, down to the last shilling, was seized.” (Wm. Cobbett, *A History of the Protestant Reformation in England and Ireland*, p. 130.)

Plunder and Destruction of the Monastic Libraries

To show their love of learning, we suppose, these royal and titled robbers of monasteries took special pleasure in destroying beautiful and priceless books. Among the libraries destroyed was that of St. Albans abbey. This was the greatest library in all England. They did not confine themselves, however, to the monastic libraries in their work of ruthless destruction and thievery. The Guild Hall library founded by Whittington and Carpenter was destroyed. The library of St. Paul's Cathedral met a like fate, as well as the predecessor of the Bodleian library at Oxford. About one hundred years before (1440), Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, "gave to the University of Oxford a library containing 600 volumes, 120 of which were valued at more than a hundred thousand pounds. These books are called *Novi Tractatus*, or new treatises, in the university register, and said to be *admirandi apparatus*. They were the most splendid and costly copies that could be procured, finely written on vellum, and elegantly embellished with miniatures and illuminations. Among the rest was a translation into French of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Only a single specimen of these splendid volumes was suffered to remain; it is a beautiful manuscript in folio of Valerius Maximus, enriched with the most elegant decorations, and written in Duke Humphrey's age, evidently with a design of being placed in this sumptuous collection. All the rest of the books, which, like this, being highly ornamented, looked like missals, and conveyed ideas of popish superstition, were destroyed or removed by the pious visitors of the university in the reign of Edward VI, whose zeal was only equalled by their avarice." (Thomas Wharton, *The History of English Poetry*, pp. 344-345.)

Monasteries Robbed and Destroyed

These pioneers of modern artistic savagery evidently confounded everything that was beautiful and artistic in workmanship with popish superstition. Not only were the monasteries robbed, sacked and gutted, but the walls were razed to the ground and the very foundations blown up in many cases with gunpowder. When the crown granted these estates to the ancestors of some modern duke or lord or earl, the husband perhaps of some American heiress, it was stipulated in the bond that they should be so destroyed. The beautiful Gothic buildings could not be allowed to stand there in silent protest against the crimes of this new gentry. What sadness their destruction must have brought to the broken hearts of the good old Catholic peasants that dwelt so happy under the shadow of their towers and spires! It is often asked, why the people did not rise up and avenge the suppression of these splendid centers of hospitality, of piety, and of learning? If the people knew the real issue, Henry never would have accomplished his ends. The common

people everywhere have risen in their defense. The king was a shrewd old schemer altogether too cunning to create a straight issue. He allowed a great many important people to share in the plunder. He told the people also that the funds of the monasteries would be put to better use, and promised things that he had not the slightest intention of fulfilling in order to quell rebellions in support of the monks. He prevented united action by every sort of trickery, a favorite subterfuge of lying knaves at all times.

The Rich vs. the Poor

“Viewed merely in its social aspect, the English Reformation was in reality the rising of the rich against the poor. In the general upheaval which accompanied the labors of the Reformers to root up Catholicism from the soil of England, most of those in place and power were enabled to grow greater in wealth and position, whilst those who had before but a small share in the good things of this world came in the process to have less. Their condition under the new order was visibly harder, till as a natural result of their misery there came forth many of the social sores which afflict society to the present day. What Cobbett’s *History of the Protestant Reformation* chiefly displays, then, is this aspect of the religious changes in the sixteenth century. His pages help us to realize the fact that the Reformation effected, besides a change in religious beliefs and practices, a wide and permanent division in the great body politic. The supposed purification of doctrine and practice was brought about only at a cost of, as it were, driving a wedge well into the heart of the nation, which at once and for all, divided the rich from the poor, and established the distinction which still exists between the classes and the masses.” (Gasquet’s preface to Cobbett’s *History of the Protestant Reformation*, p. vi.)

“But, leaving their utility out of the question, I, for my particular part, prefer alien priories to alien armies, from which latter this country has never been, except for very short intervals, wholly free, from the day that the former were suppressed. I wish not to set myself up as a dictator in matters of taste, but I must take leave to say, that I prefer the cloister to the barrack; the chanting of matins to the reveille by the drum; the cowl to the brass-fronted hairy cap; the shaven crown to the moustache, though the latter be stiffened with black-ball; the rosary, with the cross appendant, to the belt with its box of bullets; and, beyond all measures, I prefer the penance to the point of the bayonet. One or other of these sets of things, it would seem, we must have; for, before the ‘Reformation’ England never knew and never dreamed of such a thing as a standing soldier; since that event she has never, in reality, known what it was to be without such soldiers; till at last, a thundering standing army, even in time of profound peace, is openly avowed to be necessary

to the ‘preservation of our happy constitution in Church and state!’ ” (Cobbett, *History of the Protestant Reformation*, p. 59.)

One more quotation to show how many of the capitalistic things of today have their bad roots away back in the robberies and confiscations of the Protestant Reformation in England: “There was no person that came to them heavy or sad for any cause that went away comfortless; they never revenged them of any injury, but were content to forgive it freely upon submission, and if the price of corn had begun to start up in the market, they made thereunto with wain load of corn, and sold it under the market to poor people, to the end to bring down the price thereof. . . . If any poor householder lacked seed to sow his land, or bread, corn, or malt before harvest, and come to a monastery, either of men or women, he should not have gone away without help; for he should have had it until harvest, that he might easily have paid it again. Yea, if he had made his moan for an ox, horse or cow, he might have had it upon his credit, and such was the good conscience of the borrowers in those days that the thing borrowed needed not to have been asked at the day of payment. They never raised their rent, or took any income or garsomes (fines) of their tenants. . . .

“If any poor people had made their moan at the day of marriage to any abbey, they should have had money given to their great help. And thus all sorts of people were helped and succoured by abbeys; yea, happy was that person that was tenant to an abbey, for it was a rare thing to hear that any tenant was removed by taking his farm over his head, nor he was not afraid of any re-entry for non-payment of rent, if necessity drove him thereunto. And thus they fulfilled the works of charity in all the country round about them, to the good example of all lay persons that now have taken forth other lessons, that is, *nunc tempus alios postulat mores* (our times demand another moral code).” (*The Fall of Religious Houses*, Cole MSS., quoted by Cunningham, pp. 472-473.)

Article XXXVI

The Royal Plunderers Robbed the Guilds as Well as the Churches and Abbeys

Not only did the royal plunderers rob the monasteries and destroy much valuable property and priceless art treasures, but they likewise turned their attention to that portion of guild property which had been devoted to religious purposes before the Reformation. Dr. Jessopp writes thus of the consequences: “Almshouses in which old men and women were fed and clothed were robbed to the last pound, the poor almsfolk being turned out into the cold at an hour’s warning to beg their bread. Hospitals for the sick and needy, sometimes magnificently provided with nurses and chaplains, whose very *raison d’être* was that they were to look after and care for those who were past caring for themselves – these were stripped of all their

belongings, the inmates sent out to hobble into some convenient dry ditch to lie down and die or to crawl into some barn or hovel, there to be tended, not without fear of consequences, by some kindly man or woman who could not bear to see a suffering fellow creature drop down and die at their own doorsteps.” (*The Great Pillage*.)

Henry VIII, of course, began the looting, although he did not live long enough to finish it. His subservient congress, like a venal congress or senate of modern times, passed “an acte for dissolucion of colleges, chauntries, and free chapelles, at the king’s majestic’s pleasure.” It was completed in the next reign by an act entitled I Edward VI, c. XIV, whereby “all payments by corporations, misteryes or crafts, for priests’ obits and lamps,” be henceforth given to the king; also by “an acte whereby certaine chauntries, colleges, free chapelles and the possession of the same be given to the king’s majestic.”

Professor Cunningham writes that “the power of the guilds had been so much affected by the legislation of Edward VI that they had but little influence for good or evil.” (*Modern Times*, Part I, page 26.) The souls of the guilds were stolen from them with their property and their religion. They gradually became mere capitalistic societies. Their economic efficiency was a thing of the past after the confiscation of their property, even though some of them redeemed it at an exorbitant cost.

A Way Opened

The way was now surely open for political autocracy and individualistic capitalism. This wholesale looting of Church property required indeed a reformed ethic to ease the consciences of these devout men and women who possessed themselves of all this booty. The king and his agents were beautifully rewarded in a temporal way, even in addition to the spiritual blessings that accrued to their helpless subjects from the change in religion.

It was fitting, we presume, that such should be the case with single-minded men like Henry who were burning with the all-consuming desire “to purge the Church from the thorns of vices and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue”! Merrie England was dead. The abbeys and cathedrals and guild halls had had their day. The burgher folk were now a propertyless proletariat. “Englishmen once had no dread of hunger, for they once were free. Four hundred years ago they had won their way out of serfdom and had established the Golden Age. Then no man starved, for three or four days’ labor provided sufficient food for the week. So it was on the countryside, and so it was in the towns where, united in guilds, the workers were craftsmen and free. And this came about by no miraculous dispensation, but through the simple fact that those who wished to till the soil had

the opportunity to do so. Those were the days of Merrie England, when the village, surrounded by its common fields, sheltered a yeomanry the like of which the world has not seen before, and has not since. The common people, the Saxon serfs, had won their way to freedom by way of the land, for freedom consists in not being compelled to beg leave of another to toil and live.”

Land Monopoly

Upon this fair scene came the new land monopolist who was soon to grind down the old tenants into industrial slavery. Outhwaite continues the picture: “Those from whose bondage the serfs had escaped, the feudal holders of one-third of English soil, determined to re-establish serfdom. The free land they saw was the basis of freedom, and this they proceeded to add to their estates. Rapidly the transformation of the Golden Age took place as the great estates grew. The peasants rose in rebellion, but were crushed by the nobles, aided by foreign mercenaries of despotic kings. To these estates in the time of Henry VIII were added the monastery lands, held largely in trust for the people. The guilds were broken up, and the unemployed man appeared. Slavery with all its pains and penalties, the branding iron and the gallows, was established, and in the course of 50 years the Golden Age had passed away. Soon after, in the reign of Elizabeth, the first Poor Law was placed on the statute book.” The same consequences followed in other lands.

Disastrous Division

When the country broke with Catholicism, religion and spiritual interests were also separated from the economic and industrial phases of modern life. Dr. Ralph Adams Cram tells us what it meant for England, old and new: “The division was not avowed, indeed, particularly during the Puritan regime; it was part of the system that religion and life should be more at one than at any time since the early theocracy of the Hebrews. Under the Commonwealth in England, the Puritan tyranny in New England, and the capitalistic autocracy in Great Britain, it was practically impossible to draw a line between Church and state; superficially it seemed as if the identity, or rather co-operation, was more perfect than at any time during the Catholic Middle Ages. Certainly the abuses of power, the gross infractions of liberty, the negation of even rudimentary justice in legislation, in law and in society, that followed from this apparent union, were more aggravated and intolerable. As a matter of fact, however, the alliance was only between a formal and public religion and the equally formal machinery of government; it did not extend to the individual, and here, in his domestic, social, business and political

relations, the severance was almost complete. The typical figure in Protestantism is Luther, preaching a lofty doctrine of personal union with God, and conniving at bigamy, adultery and the massacre of starving peasants; and the pious iron-master or mill magnate of Bradford or Leeds, zealously supporting his favorite form of evangelicalism, pouring out his money for the support of missions to heathen countries or for the abolition of slavery, enforcing the strictest Sabbatarianism in his own household – and fighting in parliament and through the press for the right to continue to employ little children of six years old in his mines, crawling on all fours, half naked, dragging carts of coal by ropes around their tender bodies, or to profit, by the threat of starvation, through mill hands whose wages were a miserable pittance, insufficient to keep body and soul together, and who were forbidden under penalty of the law to combine with one another for self-protection.” (*The Sins of the Fathers*, pp. 94-95.)

No wonder the slums and tenements of Glasgow were crowded when the inhabitants of 3,600,000 acres could be cleared off to make a silent sanctuary for red deer, and a game preserve for a lay lord whose only title to greatness was his pillaging of all this property once belonging to the poor. And – beautiful example of Anglo-Saxon hypocrisy! – one of the reasons given for the suppression of the monasteries was that they had been too indiscriminate in their charity and that too many beggars were supported by them! Who was left now to support the beggars created by these new land lords? Who would care for the dispossessed tenants who were turned adrift on the king’s highway to make a game preserve for some good-for-nothing spendthrift?

And the monasteries were condemned for caring for those whom the spoilers of the monasteries were rendering homeless! The poor were deprived at one fell swoop of alms, shelter and schooling. Great numbers were left entirely destitute and took to begging and stealing to preserve life. Henry VIII is reputed to have put 72,000 thieves to death. Elizabeth complained bitterly that she could not enforce the laws against them. “Such was the degree of beggary, of vagabondage, and of thievishness and robbery, that she resorted, particularly in London and its neighborhood, to martial law.” She was left with two alternatives before this problem of artificially created poverty – extermination or legal pauperism. She resorted to the latter.

Beneficence of Monasteries Missed

The monasteries were missed also in realms other than those of charity and hospitality. They maintained highways and dikes, built bridges and seawalls and other such useful and necessary works for the state. The arts that had been brought to such a high state of perfection in the monasteries were now without patrons or

homes. The monks also were the transcribers of manuscripts and the chroniclers, of the Middle Ages. The monasteries performed many useful functions not a part of their primary purpose. By their suppression, therefore, the social and economic life of the community was disorganized in many directions.

There was a complete gap left in the educational system of the country, because the education of the people was largely in the hands of the monastic establishments. Those that did not avail themselves of the monastery schools found teachers in the chantry priests. When the chantries were suppressed in the reign of Edward VI, all provision for education came to an end. And there are those with us who still think that a sudden desire for enlightenment and a revival of learning took place immediately, as an effect of the Reformation.

The destruction of the monastic system of elementary education undermined the great universities that had so magnificently dispensed the blessings of higher education in Catholic England. The universities all but disappeared. The monasteries not only prepared students to enter them but maintained burses for the complete education of students desirous of the higher learning. "In the six years from 1542 to 1548, only 191 students were admitted bachelor of arts at Cambridge and only 173 at Oxford." (*Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. II, p. 468.) "When Oxford and Cambridge did again revive they were no longer the democratic institutions they had been all through the Middle Ages. They were, as they largely are to this day, finishing schools for the rich gentlemen's sons of aristocratic England.

Post-Reformation Political Doctrines

It was in post-Reformation days, too, that Oxford and Cambridge upheld the doctrine of the divine right of kings. Seven years before the "revolution" of 1688, the University of Cambridge solemnly declared in its address to Charles II: "We still believe and maintain that our kings derive not their title from the people but from God, that to Him only are they accountable, that it belongs not to the subjects either to create or censure, but to honor and obey, their sovereign, who comes to be so by a fundamental hereditary right of succession which no religion, no law, no fault or forfeiture can alter or diminish." (Seller, *The History of Passive Obedience*, p. 108.)

About the same time, Oxford University condemned as damnable the teaching of the Jesuits, Cardinal Bellarmine and Suarez, a doctrine that since has been adopted into the Declaration of American Independence, viz.: "The community, constituted into a civil society, is the natural subject on which, of its very essence and of necessity, by the natural law, civil authority descends in the first place. By the consent of the community it subsequently passes to the subject, by whom it is

permanently and formally exercised,” or in the more familiar phrasing of the unanimous declaration of the 13 States of America, in congress, July 4, 1776, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

In the “Constitutions and Canons” of the Church of England, June 30, 1640, it was made the sacred duty of every clergyman at least four times a year to preach that “the most sacred order of kings is of divine right,” and that to set up “under any pretense whatsoever, any independent co-active power, either papal or popular, whether directly or indirectly . . . is treasonable against God as well as against the king.” (Land, *Works*, V, pp. 613-614.) We wonder mildly how many university professors tell these things today to American boys and girls studying constitutional history in, their classes. How many of them give due credit to that grand old Church for handing down, in spite of the Reformation tenet of divine right, the sacred principle of liberty, that governments among men derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. Yes, indeed, for 1,600 years before Luther or Henry VIII were born, “the Roman Church was then, as it is now, a great democracy.” (President Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom*, p. 85.)

Article XXXVII

What Made Merrie England Economically Free, into England of Twentieth Century Dispossessed

Since we are interested only in the economic effects of the English Reformation, it is not at all necessary to recount the infamous penal laws passed by Henry’s successors against the practice of the Catholic religion in England. Henry VIII during his reign put to death two queens, two cardinals, two archbishops, eighteen bishops, thirteen abbotts, five hundred priors and monks, thirty-eight doctors of divinity and laws, twelve dukes and earls, one hundred and sixty-four gentlemen, one hundred and twenty-four commoners, one hundred and ten ladies.

G. K. Chesterton, in his *Short History of England*, page 165, says: “Henry was very popular in his first days. . . . In his last days he was something like a maniac. He no longer inspired love, and even when he inspired fear, it was rather the fear of a mad dog than of a watch dog. In this change doubtless the inconsistency and even disgrace of his Bluebeard weddings played a great part. And it is but just to him to say that perhaps, with the exception of the first and the last, he was as unlucky in his wives as they were in their husbands. It was undoubtedly the affair of his first divorce that broke the back of his honor. . . . The Pope denied the new

marriage, and Henry, in a storm and darkness of honor, dissolved all the old relations with the papacy. . . . Henry not only cut off England from Europe, but he cut off England from England.”

The last sentence is full of meaning. It was the English Reformation that really broke up Christendom, as Belloc writes elsewhere. It was the new English nobility, enriched by the spoliation of the monasteries, that started capitalism on its way. The distributive state existed in England when Henry VIII ascended the throne. His successors to this day rule a capitalistic state. England was indeed cut off from England. When Henry became king of England in 1509 (Calvin was born in that year and Luther was twenty-six years old), “the state, as the minds of men envisaged it at the close of this process, was an agglomeration of families of varying wealth, but by far the greater number owners of the means of production. It was an agglomeration in which the stability of the distributive system (as I have called it) was guaranteed by the existence of co-operative bodies, binding men of the same craft or of the same village together; guaranteeing the small proprietor against loss of his economic independence, while at the same time it guaranteed society against the growth of a proletariat. If liberty of purchase and of sale, of mortgage and inheritance, was restricted, it was restricted with the social object of preventing the growth of an economic oligarchy which could exploit the rest of the community. The restraints upon liberty were restraints designed for the preservation of liberty; and every action of mediaeval society, from the flower of the Middle Ages to the approach of their catastrophe, was directed towards the establishment of a state in which men should be economically free through the possession of capital and land.

“Save here and there in legal formulae, or in rare patches isolated and eccentric, the servile institution had totally disappeared; nor must it be imagined that anything in the nature of collectivism had replaced it. There was common land, but it was common land jealously guarded by men who were also personal proprietors of other land. Common property in the village was but one of the forms of property, and was used rather as the flywheel to preserve the regularity of the co-operative machine than as a type of holding in any way particularly sacred. The guilds had property in common, but that property was the property necessary to their co-operative life; their halls, their funds for relief, their religious endowments. As for the instruments of their trades, those instruments were owned by the individual members, not by the guilds, save where they were of so expensive a kind as to necessitate a corporate control.

“Such was the transformation which had come over European society in the course of ten Christian centuries. Slavery had gone, and in its place had come that establishment of free possession which seemed so normal to men, and so consonant to a happy human life. No particular name was then found for it. Today

and now that it has disappeared, we must construct an awkward one, and say that the Middle Ages had instinctively conceived and brought into existence the distributive state.

“That excellent consummation of human society passed, as we know, and was in certain provinces of Europe, but more particularly in Britain, destroyed.

The Substitute for the Old Order

“For a society in which the determinant mass of families were owners of capital and of land; for one in which production was regulated by self-governing corporations of small owners; and for one in which the misery and insecurity of a proletariat was unknown, there came to be substituted the dreadful moral anarchy against which all moral effort is now turned, and which goes by the name of Capitalism.” (*The Servile State*, by Hilaire Belloc, pp. 50-52.)

The question, then, is, “How did such a catastrophe come about? Why was it permitted, and upon what historical process did it batten? What turned an England economically free into the England which we know today, of which at least one-third is indigent, of which nineteen-twentieths are dispossessed of capital and of land, and of which the whole industry and national life is controlled upon its economic side by a few chance directors of millions, a few masters of unsocial and irresponsible monopolies?” (*The Servile State*, *ibidem*.)

A Superficial Answer

A superficial answer is that this misfortune came about through a material change in the process of production known as the “Industrial Revolution.” But how could expensive machinery alone, or the concentration of industry and its implements, enslave, accidentally as it were, without the directing power of a human will, a whole nation, and every succeeding nation that went to make up modern industrial civilization?

Capitalism was not the growth of the industrial movement nor of the chance discovery of machinery. The industrial system as we know it is an effect of capitalism, not its cause. Capitalism existed for years in England before the present industrial system came into being. There may be a case made out for industrialism had capitalism not been present, when coal, power and machinery became the concentrated implements of production in the big factory towns. A revolution in the means of production, on the one hand, and the great majority, the great mass of the common people, the proletariat dispossessed of these means of production, land and capital, depending on the few for their lives, their liberties and their happiness made modern capitalism possible.

In the nineteenth century, the work commenced by Henry VIII in the sixteenth had come to its maturity. England was now a capitalistic state. It was the type and model of capitalism for the world. A very small group of citizens held all the means of production. The mass of the English nation was dispossessed of capital and land. Without the security of privately owned property they lacked the elements of economic freedom. They did not possess political freedom. They could vote for a capitalist to represent their interests in the mother of parliaments! The great mass of the English people were in a worse situation economically than were ever free citizens before in the history of western Europe. Their property had been stolen from them with their religion. The religious revolution had also begotten an economic revolution in the sixteenth century.

“The lands and the accumulated wealth of the monasteries were taken out of the hands of their old possessors with the intention of vesting them in the crown – but they passed, as a fact, not into the hands of the crown, but into the hands of an already wealthy section of the community, who, after the change was complete, became in the succeeding hundred years the governing power of England.” (*The Servile State*, ibidem, p. 58.) There is in England the same governing power to this day. They are those of whom Lloyd George declared, “that their hands were still dripping with the fat of ancient sacrilege.”

Historical Conclusions

We have stated as historical conclusions the opposition and envy that existed in the sixteenth and succeeding centuries between churchmen and capitalists, between Christendom and capitalism. The war begun in the religious revolt has never ceased. It cannot cease until God’s kingdom is set up in the social order again as it was before the Reformation.

“The subjection of the community to capitalist industrialism and the distortion of property by plutocracy have made the very conception of Christendom not only unrealizable, but for the majority of men today even incomprehensible. They are not, as many seem to imagine, processes which have come about fortuitously, or for reasons which were beyond the power of society to control. They arose because, with the decay of the great mediaeval standards of vocation and fraternity, and the consequent corruption of the social institutions founded upon them, nothing remained to preserve the purpose of society as the glorification of God. Society – a harmony of interwoven purposes, communally organized – gave place to the state, with its monopoly of power for the glorification of its rulers, till the heresies of individualism came to take their intellectual vengeance for the suppressed truth of the claims of human personality. The cry went forth for freedom, economic no less than political; but it was a freedom conceived not as a

social means, but as a personal end, an “absolute value,” an opportunity for the glorification of man, or, to be more precise, for the glorification of a certain kind of man. For it was freedom to excel each other without restraint that men were in fact claiming, not a freedom to contribute to any common purpose; and this precisely at a time when the opportunity of the energetic and the avaricious was being miraculously enlarged, by discoveries which offered to such men, not only new powers over natural resources, but new and terrible tyrannies over their fellows. The industrial revolution – the most ruthless of all revolutions – carried its devastations across a society that had lost all traces of the old defences of vocation and fraternity, which it is only now attempting painfully to restore in their secular forms of function and solidarity. Industrialism could never have taken the hideous forms it has done if mechanical discoveries had developed in a society founded on free associations and corporate ideals.” (*The Return of Christendom, the Idea of Christendom in Relation to Modern Society*, M. B. Reckitt, M. A., pp. 6-7.)

Article XXXVIII

Woodrow Wilson on the Causes of Opposition to Capitalism

Woodrow Wilson, ex-president of the United States of America, has an article in the August, 1923, *Atlantic Monthly*, in which he analyzes the causes of the present universal social unrest and perturbation. He says there, that the Russian revolution was the product of the whole Russian social system that went before it. And then turning to the root cause of social unrest elsewhere he states calmly: “And yet everyone who has an intelligent knowledge of social forces must know that great and widespread reactions like that which is unquestionably manifesting itself against capitalism do not occur without cause or provocation; and before we commit ourselves irreconcilably to an attitude of hostility to this movement of the time, we ought, frankly to put to ourselves the question: Is the capitalistic system unimpeachable? which is another way of asking: Have capitalists generally used their power for the benefit of the countries in which their capital is employed and for the benefit of their fellow men?”

“Is it not, on the contrary, too true that capitalists have often seemed to regard the men whom they used as mere instruments of profit, whose physical and mental powers it was legitimate to exploit with as slight cost to themselves as possible, either of money or of sympathy? Have not many fine men who were actuated by the highest principles in every other relationship of life seemed to hold that generosity and humane feeling were not among the imperative mandates of conscience in the conduct of a banking business, or in the development of an industrial or commercial enterprise?”

“And if these offenses against high morality and true citizenship have been frequently observable, are we to say that the blame for the present discontent and turbulence is wholly on the side of those who are in revolt against them? Ought we not, rather, to seek a way to remove such offenses and make life itself clean for those who will share honorably and cleanly in it?”

Something to Be Read and Pondered

The distinguished writer concludes this article which everybody should read in its entirety: “The sum of the whole matter is this, that our civilization cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated with the spirit of Christ and being made free and happy by the practices which spring out of that spirit. Only thus can discontent be driven out and all the shadows lifted from the road ahead.

“Here is the final challenge to our churches, to our political organizations, and to our capitalists – to everyone who fears God and loves his country. Shall we not all earnestly co-operate to bring in the new day?” (*The Road Away from Revolution*, Woodrow Wilson.)

This seems to us a momentous statement. If some labor leader wrote it, we have not the slightest doubt but that some very grave and reverend patriots would denounce it as un-American, Socialistic, red and radical. But if we were all as intelligently educated as Mr. Woodrow Wilson, we would be more inclined to consider broadly, before condemning narrowly, statements of like import.

An Older Treatment of the Same Subject

Since we are writing for intelligent Catholic readers, we will just draw their attention to the fact that a greater man than Woodrow Wilson wrote the same thing just thirty-four years ago. In that famous document, which would not inappropriately bear the title “Revolution,” because these encyclicals are known and quoted under their opening words, and this one is called the “*Rerum Novarum*,” or revolutionary change, Leo XIII analyzed the spirit of revolutionary change which had been for long disturbing the nations. What he then so greatly feared has since come to pass, as Mr. Wilson remarks, in the case of the Russian empire. And just to show you that our illustrious ex-president has not said anything very new or very radical, but that he is simply repeating what Leo said to the world on May 15, 1891, permit us to quote the opening paragraph of Pope Leo’s *Encyclical on the Condition of the Working Classes*:

“But all agree, and there can be no question whatever, that some remedy must be found, and found quickly, for the misery and wretchedness pressing so heavily and unjustly at this moment on the vast majority of the working classes.

“For the ancient workmen’s guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other organizations took their place. Public institutions and the very laws have set aside the ancient religion. Hence by degrees it has come to pass that workingmen have been surrendered, all isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition. The mischief has been increased by rapacious usury, which although more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with the like injustice, still practiced by covetous and grasping men. To this must be added the custom of working by contract, and the concentration of so many branches of trade in the hands of a few individuals; so that small numbers of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.”

Causes of Unrest

There are the causes of the social unrest and perturbation and the spirit of revolution stated calmly and deliberately as becometh the greatest of moral teachers, the vicar of Christ. After the lapse of thirty-four long years and with the conditions in Russia and Europe before him, ex-President Wilson repeats what Leo then wrote. “Our civilization,” says Wilson in August, 1923, “cannot survive materially unless it be redeemed spiritually. It can be saved only by becoming permeated with the spirit of Christ.” In May, 1891, Leo said: “We approach the subject with confidence, and in the exercise of the rights which belong to us. For no practical solution of this question will ever be found without the assistance of Religion and the Church. It is We who are the chief guardian of Religion, and the chief dispenser of what belongs to the Church, and we must not by silence neglect the duty which lies upon Us. . . . But We affirm without hesitation that all the striving of men will be vain if they leave out the Church. It is the Church that proclaims from the Gospel these teachings by which the conflict can be ended.” (*Rerum Novarum*.)

Thanks be to God that the ex-President of Princeton and of the United States of America is not ashamed to write in our most literary magazine, in the year of grace, 1923, what Leo XIII, the Pope of Rome and of the workingman, told the world in 1891. If we live to be very old we hope to see the day, perhaps thirty-two years hence, when some Catholic school in these great United States of America will pluck up enough moral courage to make the Encyclical, *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII, a textbook in industrial ethics for Catholic youth, years of course after

the first farm-labor president shall have issued a proclamation prescribing its reading in all the public schools on Labor day, just as now, thanks to Thomas Jefferson, we read the doctrine of Bellarmine and Suarez on civil liberty on Independence day. The *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII shall be the great charter of American industrial democracy, as the teaching of the two great and holy Jesuits in the Declaration of Independence is the great charter of American political democracy. But is it not a sad thing that we should leave it even to an ex-President of the United States to give Leo's teaching to the American people? Any political party in America today that would make Leo's Encyclical Letter on the Condition of the Working Man its campaign platform, would be swept triumphantly into office in 1928.

Reducing a Plea

And to prove that this is no idle dream, allow us to quote an editorial from a well-known metropolitan daily: "It may seem sacrilegious to reduce Woodrow Wilson's lofty plea for the 'Salvation of Civilization,' published in *The Atlantic Monthly*, to the level of everyday politics. Yet that is where its significance lies. Wilson's challenge to the capitalistic system and his warning that the remedy for 'universal unrest and perturbation' is 'not to be found in superficial politics or in mere economic blunders,' is exactly what thinking folks are beginning to realize.

"A very strong group of Democratic leaders has had it in mind to make just such a ringing declaration for the guidance of their party. Either they did not dare to do it, or did not know how, and now Wilson has come along to do it for them. . . . A hundred years after Jefferson's time, Wilson, leading the forces of democracy, discovered that the tyrant of today is our economic system, which we call capitalism. In both international and domestic affairs, it is boss. And so he warns us, and undertakes to add a new objective for those who strive for democracy.

"If what he says seems very remote, just remember that political and religious freedom seemed very hard to attain when Jefferson fought for them. In time to come, men may look back at Wilson's dreams with an equally clarified perspective."

Yes, and if we were alive a hundred years from now, perhaps some poor innocent Catholic sister will be teaching her class, from a textbook written by some atheist in the University of Oklahoma, that Woodrow Wilson was the author of the doctrines of the *Rerum Novarum*, as we find textbooks today teaching that Thomas Jefferson was the first to enunciate the doctrines of democracy contained in the Declaration of Independence, because on that day the teaching of Pope Leo will be as popular and American as that of Cardinal Bellarmine is today.

Relation of the Subject to the Reformation

But what has all this got to do with the economic effects of the Reformation? Just this much: As the world discovered in 1776 that the doctrines of the political democracy of the Middle Ages could destroy the Reformation teaching of the divine right of kings, even though they were driveling Anglo-Saxon monarchs, so also in due time will the mediaeval doctrines of industrial democracy replace the now current and accepted tenets of capitalistic plutocracy. Both tyrannies are bad legacies of Reformation theology.

“It is in this sense that the ideals and even the achievements of mediaevalism, for all their enormous imperfections, offer us a pattern so inspiring, an example so unique. We cannot, we would not if we could, ‘go back to the Middle Ages,’ but it is from the nobler efforts of the Middle Ages that we should seek to go forward, from the days before men had proved unworthy of the ideal of Christendom, and before the time when in fleeing from its corruptions they attained no new fellowship, but only ‘the isolation of the human soul.’ That ideal is one which cannot be immediately recovered. . . . After some five centuries of ‘egocentric’ social organizations, culminating in one hundred and fifty years of plutocratic industrialism, its spiritual truths cannot be apprehended by the masses when preached to them in theological form. Nor is it easier to awaken the pious from a somnolent orthodoxy to the implications of the tremendous task to which, by their profession of their creed, they are committed. But in the process of constructing a society built as a real challenge to the existing values, an arena would be created in which the recovery of Faith would become possible, and its full meaning at last visible to the many to whom in this tangle of social apostasy it can never be revealed. The recovery of the guild, for example, would offer a glimpse of the great ideal which that indispensable organization attempted in a vital respect to fulfil. There may be a few who can recognize the Rock on which Christendom must be built, but the many must set to building it, realizing gradually its full splendors as the towers rise upon their humble stones.” (*The Return of Christendom*, pp. 26-27.)

As Mr. Wilson puts it: “Here is the final challenge to our Churches, to our political organizations, and to our capitalists – to everyone who fears God or loves his country. Shall we not all earnestly co-operate to bring in this new day?”

Wilson’s Mediaeval Catholic Truth

For our own part we are delighted to see our illustrious war President, Woodrow Wilson, preaching such fine mediaeval Catholic truth to our fellow citizens in *The Atlantic Monthly*, even though it is now thirty-four years since they were struck off

by the Vatican press. There are a lot of Americans you know who would listen to a President, teaching moral theology, who for some reason or other pay little heed to a Pope. And again to keep to the point: "If they made a list of the things on which Protestants at the Reformation denounced the Church, they would find the whole mind of the modern world was on the side of the Church in those things. The whole world had turned completely round upon the points that were at issue at the Reformation. If the quarrel between the Pope and Luther were conducted at this moment in the exact terms in which it was conducted, so far as the modern world had any opinion it would be on the side of the Pope." (G. K. Chesterton.)

To go with the current will soon mean to be swimming in the right direction! And then?

Article XXXIX

The Foundations of Modern Capitalism; Its Machinery Greased by the Fat of Sacrilege

The confiscation and plunder of the monasteries under Henry VIII, and of the guilds under Edward VI, or rather under Edward's guardian Somerset, laid the foundations of modern capitalism. It happened in this way. In the England of Henry's day the soil and its fixtures constituted the great bulk of the country's wealth. Its coal and industries, its trade and commerce, came to be the great sources of wealth that they now are only in later times. At the end of the Middle Ages the soil of England supported probably about five million people. It was owned by a wealthy land-owning class. About a third of the soil of England was owned by lay lords, and another third by the Church, which up to 1535 would mean that it was owned and managed by Cathedral chapters, communities of monks and nuns, educational establishments conducted by the clergy, etc.

Now when Henry and his successors dissolved the monasteries and confiscated Church property, it might not have had bad results if all this booty had remained in the hands of the crown. It would have placed enormous power, political and economic, in the hands of a central government. But the crown failed to keep possession of the stolen Church property. The large land owners were too strong for the monarchy. They demanded that a large share of the spoils should go to themselves. They were powerful enough in parliament and elsewhere to gain their ends. With what they already possessed in addition to what they acquired from the plunder of the monasteries, they probably owned more than half of the soil of England immediately after the Reformation. This quasi-monopoly of the national wealth made the new nobility the economic masters of the whole community. They could buy, of course, to the greatest advantage. They squeezed the last shilling of rent from their tenants who were formerly treated so generously by their clerical

landlords, the monks. They filled the universities and the judiciary. Where before the crown decided disputes between great and small, now the great lords were the judges, and more and more were they able to decide in their own favor when it was a question between rich and poor. Soon they bought up the bulk of the means of production. Small and independent property ceased to be privately owned in the face of this new and ruthless competition. In the course of a few generations they had formed the great landed estates and possessed themselves of the great squire's houses, which cover the face of England to this day. These are no relics of feudalism as the American tourist, having only a merely superficial, or no knowledge at all of English history, is lead to believe. The old manorial houses of mediaeval England, where the Catholic gentry lived, only as the richest farmers among their fellows, have long since ceased to be. These great country houses and rural palaces that now meet the eye of the traveler all date after the Reformation.

New Wealth

This mass of new nobility was wealthy beyond all proportion to the older aristocracy of Catholic times. The members of the dissolution parliament had got their price for voting. And thus was laid the foundation of much of England's noble lineage. The power and social prestige of the leading English families – the Cavendishes, the Howards, the Russels, the Cecils – was raised on the ruins of the ancient religion.

Economic Revolution Accomplished

One hundred years after the dissolution of the monasteries the economic revolution was accomplished. The old traditions of Catholic England were broken memories. The new nobility, equal to the crown in wealth, dominated it through their position in parliament, which they controlled. The monarchy dwindled into insignificance in the government of England, which was gradually taken over by a powerful oligarchy of wealth. The civil wars of the seventeenth century were really a struggle between the old monarchy and the new wealth. The monarchy lost all real power when Charles I lost his head in 1649. When the monarchy was restored, the king was only a salaried puppet, which he remains to this day. A few wealthy families had got hold of the means of production, and where there is economic power, there finally also is the true seat of political power. From the reign of Charles I until the rise of the labor party in English political life, the families who possessed themselves of the wealth of England by robbing the Church in the sixteenth century were the government of England, its prime ministers, its judges, its higher education, its bishops, its admirals and its generals.

We admit that Charles had trouble with Protestants and Puritans who looked upon him with suspicion because he had married a Catholic wife. But with the parliament, his trouble was different. The landlords composing it had grievances of their own. They had things their own way during the two preceding reigns of Elizabeth and James I. Therefore they resented Charles' attempts to curb their power. He requested the landlords to live on their estates instead of spending their time in London. He appointed a commission "to inquire touching depopulations and conversions of lands to pasture." This evil was destroying rural life and pressing hard on the poorer inhabitants. Charles imposed heavy fines upon the delinquents. One Sir Anthony Roper was fined thirty thousand pounds for committing depopulations. Charles arranged also that the weight of taxation fell heavily on the trading and wealthy classes. Parliament was determined to put a stop to this line of action. By indirection, as usual, they got the mob to believe that Charles desired a change in the national religion. "If it were not for the reiterated cry about religion, they would never be sure of keeping the people on their side." (*Commentaries on the Life and Reign of Charles I*, by Isaac Disrael, pp. 330-1, vol. I.)

Landlords Triumphant

"It was by such means that parliament secured the support of London, which was the center of Puritanism and which played such a decisive part in the civil war. The end was as we all know. Charles was defeated, and eventually executed. The landlords triumphed, and parliament rewarded the people for their support by transferring to their shoulders the burden of taxation which was taken off land and profits on trade and put upon food. It was thus that the foundations of English 'liberty' were laid upon a firm and democratic basis, and taxation broadened. Since the defeat of Charles, no monarch or statesman has seriously attempted to put a boundary to the depredations of landlordism and capitalism." (Penty, "The Reformation in England," *A Guildsman's Interpretation of History*, pp. 186-187.)

English capitalism had fought the crown that created it and won: by the year 1700 more than half of England's population were dispossessed of capital and land. Not half of England's population owned the houses in which it lived, or tilled the soil, from which it could be cleared with all the legal sanctions of English law without one cent of compensation.

Yet, if half of the population of England today owned house or land, how happy we would say they were. By 1700 half of England's manhood were proletarian; in this day in which we scream and shriek of progress and democracy so hysterically, nineteen-twentieths of England's population are a dispossessed proletariat. And this after the world was made safe for democracy, and Lloyd George had promised

legislation that would make old England a home worthy of heroes! How then do men seriously call themselves conservatives and lovers of private property, the while they try to perpetuate this inhuman and unjust condition in any nation? We have proved our thesis then, that it was the Reformation teaching in England, the dissolution of the monasteries, the confiscation of Church property, the robbery and destruction of the guilds by Henry VIII and his successors, which made England capitalist.

Reformation and Socialism

Before going on to prove the other side of our thesis, that Socialism is also a result of Reformation teaching, we must show, first, how the industrial revolution, consequent on the introduction of machinery into the production of goods, enabled capitalism, already enthroned, to place upon the teeming masses of the dispossessed proletariat poor, “a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.”

Political economists know that if the industrial development of modern times had taken place in a civilization that was economically free, as was the Middle Ages, it would not be at all that ugly, unlovely thing it is today. It would have taken on a co-operative form, a mold in which the traditions of a thousand years had taught Christian Europe to work. Even the serf of mediaevalism, were he to return today, and look about the Anglo-Saxon world, and listen to campaigning congressmen spouting about the blessings of democracy, would be most logically skeptical of all our boasted political progress, when told that nineteen-twentieths of England’s population were entirely propertyless, depending for the next meal on the economic uncertainty of whether New England or Old England cotton-masters had secured next year’s contract for clothing dusky savages on the banks of the Nile or the Ganges!

Yes, “it was in England that the industrial system arose. It was in England that all its traditions and habits were formed; and because the England in which it arose was already a capitalist England, modern industrialism, wherever you see it at work today, having spread from England, has proceeded upon the capitalist model.” (Hilaire Belloc, *The Servile State*, p. 69.) And, we would add, it was all these things, because it was a Protestant and a Puritan England. It was a meditation along these lines that prompted Mr. Chesterton, now one of the two most intelligent Catholic laymen in England, to write that glorious Hibernianism; “It would seem still more perverse, yet it would be still more precise, to say that the most important event in English history was the event that never happened at all – the English revolution on the lines of the French revolution.” He was just after saying that the most important event in English history happened in France in 1789!

And yet, this is the world also in which we, too, live. No matter what we may think about it, the whole political genius of these United States of America, its entire industrial and social order, is cast for ever in an Agio-Saxon mold. That mold is not Catholic, nor in the sense of mediaeval England is it Christian. It is post-Reformation, Protestant and Puritan.

Plutocracy a Religion

“Into a social order so compounded, how can God’s kingdom come ? By what means even can the very idea of Christendom return? Plutocracy (and the capitalist fabric through which it operates) does not merely constitute a force hostile to religion: it is a religion. When we ask at the death of its great devotees how much they died worth, we are inquiring (and often appropriately enough) of nothing else about them than the amount of financial power they had contrived to obtain. Nor is it at death only that this religion enforces its claims, nor by its elect exclusively that it demands to be acknowledged. It disputes with the Church of Christ for the destiny of its children. At the moment when the boy (or girl) in a working-class parish is being urged to make recognition of the tremendous claims made for him at his baptism, he is going forth into a world which by every manifestation of its public life promptly denies and frustrates every one of them, and makes plain his fate as a member of the proletariat, the child of Mammon and the inheritor (if he lives long enough) of nothing but the servile dole of an old-age pension. How can the priest bid the wage slave commend his vocation to God, or serve faithfully a fraternity in which he has neither status nor honor? He cannot find these things in his work; but till he can do so, the Church which sends him forth can never rightly be other than a foe to the social order which so tragically engulfs him.” (Maurice Bennington Reckitt, *The Idea of Christendom in Relation to Modern Society*.)

“It is this situation which calls loudly for a return of Catholic Christendom. Protestantism is helpless; for its distortion of both religion and morality is largely responsible for the actual state of things. It destroyed the only world-wide fellowship man has ever known, and broke up that unity of belief upon which it rested. Now there hardly exists any common tradition of belief in respect of either truth or justice regarded as objective spiritual goods. Reason divorced from faith becomes destructive of the one, whilst blind self-interest makes the other seem impossible.

“Thus on every side we see no hope for the future of society, unless it can be redeemed from its miseries by some power beyond itself; which can only exorcise the demons of proud self-complacency, selfish greed, materialism and black despair which alternately fill it, but also build it afresh on altogether new foundations. To this situation Catholicism has its answer. Only God can redeem, as

He alone can create; and there is no remedy for these maladies except that which the Catholic Gospel provides. The misery and confusion of our modern world and the incapacity of all its boasted knowledge to find any way out – all these things are so many signs pointing us back to the old foundations.” (*The Necessity of Catholic Dogma*, Lionel Spencer Thornton.)

Article XL

How Machinery Helped to Dispossess Property Owners

We have shown how England became a capitalistic state. It was capitalistic in its tendencies from the time Henry VIII began to rob the Church and the monasteries, say from the year 1536. The process was complete about the year 1700. Yet, the first practical steam engine, Newcomen’s, was not set to work until 1705. James Watt took out his patent for the steam engine in 1769, the year in which Wellington and Bonaparte were born. By the introduction of Watt’s condenser, Newcomen’s engine became the great instrument of production which has transformed our industry. James Hargreaves patented the spinning-jenny in 1770. In 1771 Arkwright established, a successful mill at Cromford on the Derwent, in which he employed his patent spinning machine, or “water-frame,” which derived its name from the fact that it was worked by water power. In 1779, Crompton superseded these two inventions by a spinning machine called the “mule.” It was called by this name as being the hybrid offspring of both its mechanical predecessors. A like service was performed for weaving by Dr. Cartwright’s invention of the “power loom” in 1785, which was not used before the year 1813. Thus, in the lifetime of a man from 1705 to 1785, took place the “Industrial Revolution” which has transformed English society, and led to that modern industrial expansion which has placed the world in the peril in which we see it today.

The population of Europe has increased 44 per cent since 1840. Some people think that this is a direct effect of industrialism. But the output of food stuffs, grain and meat, has increased 57 per cent. Nordau tells us that “if the soil of Europe were tilled and managed like that of China, it would support one thousand millions of human beings instead of its three hundred and sixteen millions, who are so poorly fed that they are emigrating annually by the hundreds of thousands to other parts of the world.”

The factory system, therefore, has brought us no blessings in the way of increased population that could not be obtained better without it. “The reaction against the factory craze has already set in, but, as Gibbons points out, high rents stand in the way not only of intensive farming, but also of increasing the number of acres under crops. We may do well to remember these pungent words from *The*

Conventional Lies of Civilization: ‘The European factory operative is even now the slave of the negro on the Congo. He stills his hunger with vile whisky, spends his life in the factories, and dies of tuberculosis, so that some barbarian may lead a more comfortable existence than has heretofore been the case. This feverish labour, which is not applied to the production of food, but to industrial over-production, will finally produce a nation of hungry money-bags. The world may then behold the spectacle of a county where a piano of the very latest make stands in every cottage, the people rustling in brand-new clothing, but with disease in their homes, no blood in their veins, and consumption in their lungs.’” (*The Industrial Revolution*, Professor Beard, p. 44.)

Age of Mechanical Invention

The “Industrial Revolution,” then, is only a little more than a century old. It began in real earnest only during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. We may speak of this period as the age of mechanical invention. The blast furnace, the steam engine, the self-acting “mule” and the power loom have wrought revolutions in industrial life which became possible only when used by men who had already accumulated capital in large masses by the means described in the foregoing articles.

The sole aim of so-called civilization during the last century is, through this combination of capital controlling machinery, the production of material wealth in larger and ever larger quantities. It is only since the Great War that people generally are waking up to the fact that the whole mad rush and roar of modern industrialism is leading nowhere. At first, people were intoxicated by its enormous advantages, which they are slowly learning are outweighed by its still more enormous evils. Even before the Great War, scholars were asking themselves questions. They were beginning to have fears about the nature of the ultimate goal of all this inventive mechanical progress called modern civilization.

“Capital accumulated in larger masses, and seeking for remunerative investment, has also been the principal agent in diffusing the triumphs of western civilization throughout the globe. Railways have been laid down, and factories created in distant parts of the old world, by the enterprise of Englishmen, Frenchmen and Germans; while in the new world our efforts are surpassed, not only by the ingenuity of American undertakings, but by the vast scale on which they are carried out. Japan has caught the fever, and is copying the achievements of European peoples. Private and associated capital, with its extraordinary fluidity and power of transporting skilled labor and the products of labor, is diffusing the last results of our material progress among savages and half-civilized races. We might have continued to trade with them as the seventeenth-century companies did

and left them little affected by the intercourse; but western capitalists, by introducing modern inventions, have brought about startling changes, for good or for evil, in the social conditions of every country to which they have found their way.

The Career of Conquest

“It is thus that western civilization has come to launch out in its ruthless career of conquest. Its two salient features – the subjugation of natural forces and its extraordinary facility for procuring material wealth – have a fitness of their own; they are sure to survive, they are bound to force their entrance into every land and to compel society to adapt itself to them. And herein lies the danger; we may come, in our admiration of these marvels, to regard material progress as an end in itself, and to lose sight of the ideals for human society and for individual life which are the most precious of earthly possessions. It will be sad indeed, if while multiplying the opportunities that might be devoted to the cultivation of a truly noble life, we lose the power and desire to use these opportunities worthily.” (*Western Civilization*, Cunningham, pp. 14-15.)

The great inventions which started off the industrial revolution naturally created a wonderful expansion of trade and commerce. Aristocratic in the good sense, and divine right in its only true sense, crumbled before the new forces, the institutions of the secular state. The corporate spirit of mediaeval society, permeated with Christian principles, resolved into the chaos of unrestrained individualism in every department of industrial, commercial, political or national activity. The old laws were inadequate because never intended to cope with the new conditions and a philosophy of state nonrestriction had supplanted guild control of industrial production. The employment of land, capital and labor in any way that would bring the largest returns in profits to the new captains of industry was considered legitimate. There was no sense of social ethic in the new and revolutionary moral order that was supplanting Christendom.

Every writer on political economy upheld this fatal doctrine of individual liberty as justification enough for the most immoral social and industrial conditions that could disgrace any civilization. The summa of this new political-economic license appeared in a historic year, 1776. In that year was published Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*. This work is still the bible of the unethical doctrines of “Laissez faire.” Strange as it may seem, the author, Adam Smith, LL. D. and P. R. S., was formerly professor of moral philosophy in the University of Glasgow.

No Restraining Force

The old Church did not exist in the England of that day as a restraining moral force against the sordid cupidity of the new wealthy classes. The Reformation Church did not concern itself with questions of social ethics. In any case, it never was a Church that cared for the poor. "Ward thought that the deplorable social conditions of the country were owing to the inactivity of the ruling Church which had lost her Christian character as the refuge of the poor."

Just at this time, Seeley's book, *The Peril of the Nation*, appeared. In support of the facts that are here brought to light, Ward describes the sad social conditions of the "Manufacturing Poor," the "Mining Poor," "Workshop Laborers," "Commercial Classes" and the "Agricultural Poor." The Church was called upon to face this scandalous state of affairs and to come forward with help, for, says Ward, civil municipalities protect in the first place their own interests, which are nearly always connected with their property. Therefore the Church, which always insists upon the principles of Christian equality, has to be the poor man's law court where justice will be given him. She has to hold before the world "a picture of Christian equality as an edifying example, and to assign an honorable position to the poor and helpless, regarding everything that hurts or lowers them as an offense against the Church and an outrage to the common sentiments of Christians." "Never have the sufferings of the poor," says Ward, "even in the most corrupted Catholic times been so great and withal so disregarded as in post-Reformation times."

Before the Reformation a quasi-sacramental character was attributed to the *pauperes Christi* and it was the especial office of the clergy to bring their complaints to the ears of the civil authorities. When, therefore, John Stuart Mill "beheld the torpidity and cowardice which was the common characteristic of this new epoch," he thought it was the natural consequence of advancing civilization which would not disappear until a new and improved system of philosophy should counteract the spread of these abuses. Ward believed that only a Church resting on firm moral doctrines could supply such a system. The absence of any arrangements for the moral training of the poor in Church and state is, according to him, one of the principal reasons for the practical corruption which existed. Immediate measures must be taken by means of state intervention and the Church must help indirectly by fulfilling her duties of demanding the application of Christian principles to political government and also directly by making special provisions for the education and support of the poor." (*Social Catholicism in England*, by Dr. Karl Waninger, pp. 60-63.)

Inventions Not the Cause of Industrial Society

The point we wish to make then is this, that the new inventions themselves which produced an industrial revolution in the powers of production were not the cause of that form of society now known and hated under the name of industrial. There is no intrinsic connection between a vast increase in the powers of production, in population and accumulation of wealth, and the fact that the mass of the people in the countries where all these things happened should be a dispossessed and poverty-stricken proletariat, and that the wealth and political control of power should be entirely in the hands of a comparatively few individuals, in the nations which we love to call democratic, industrial, and socially and educationally progressive. In a word, what is there in the nature of things, whereby a few mechanical contrivances driven by power should produce a capitalistic state developing by leaps and bounds into a servile one?

We are painfully aware of the answer which a most appalling ignorance has given to this question. It is broadcasted in textbooks innumerable, edited by Ph. D.'s of variegated vintage. It is commonplace among the half-educated products of department-store universities. So hopelessly decadent are we even in a Catholic sense, that unless we quoted a Pope or an ecumenical council in favor of the ethical and historically correct answer, the fine old Catholic and traditionally Christian view would be dubbed socialistic, by at least wealthy lay pillars of the household of the Faith.

No. The new instruments of production, the new machinery and the new implements of power did not fatally and of themselves develop a capitalistic state in which a very privileged few own all the means of wealth production, and the masses are a mere proletariat – that great mass of the common people that our own Lincoln said, “God Almighty must have loved so well since He made so many of them.” The bad philosophy behind this theory is, that by false arguments, these same masses have been taught to believe that all the horrors of the industrial system are a blind and necessary product of material and impersonal forces, and that wherever the steam engine, the power loom, the blast furnace and the Ford car were introduced, there fatally would sooner or later appear a little group of pious owners patriotically and conservatively exploiting the vast majority of the dispossessed!

“It is astonishing that a statement so unhistorical should have gained so general a credence. Indeed, were the main truths of English history taught in our schools and universities today, were educated men familiar with the determining and major facts of the national past, such follies could never have taken root. The vast growth of the proletariat, the concentration of ownership into the hands of a few owners, and the exploitation by those owners of the mass of the community, had no fatal or

necessary connection with the discovery of new and perpetually improving methods of production. The evil proceeded in direct historical sequence, proceeded patently and demonstrably, from the fact that England, the seed-plot of the industrial system, was already captured by a wealthy oligarchy before the series of great discoveries began.” (*The Servile State*, Hilaire Belloc, pp. 71-72.)

Article XLI

How the Plunder of the Church Dispossessed and Created a Proletariat

In our last article we showed how the new inventions were not the cause of the present industrial system, but that “industrialism” itself fell into a capitalistic groove because capitalism already existed, and was on the grounds, as it were, when the industrial revolution took place, the only competitors for the possession of the new machine being a dispossessed and propertyless proletariat. This dispossessed proletariat was created as a direct result of the plunder and robbery of the Church and the monasteries, by Henry VIII and his immediate successors. The Reformation, therefore, gave the world capitalism, and capitalism, by possessing itself without competition of the new mechanical inventions, gave us the industrial system. The horrors and cruelties and injustices of the capitalistic industrial system during the nineteenth, and the last quarter of the eighteenth century, gave us socialism, an extreme form of reaction against the social and industrial evils of post-Reformation civilization, or rather absence of civilization.

And since we love to back up our every statement by the most authoritative and conservative judgments of the most scholarly statesmen and theologians, let us take to heart the most recent opinion of ex-President Wilson apropos of our thesis: “What gave rise to the Russian revolution? The answer can only be that it was the product of a whole social system. It was not in fact a sudden thing. It had been gathering head for several generations. It was due to the systematic denial to the great body of Russians of the rights and privileges which all normal men desire and must have if they are to be contented and within reach of happiness. The lives of the great mass of the Russian people contained no opportunities, but were hemmed in by barriers against which they were constantly flinging their spirits, only to fall back bruised and dispirited. Only the powerful were suffered to secure their rights or even to gain access to the means of material success.

“It is to be noted as a leading fact of our time that it was against ‘capitalism’ that the Russian leaders directed their attack. It was capitalism that made them see red; and it is against capitalism under one name or another that the discontented classes everywhere draw their indictment . . . and yet everyone who has an intelligent knowledge of social forces must know that great and widespread reactions like that which is now unquestionably manifesting itself against capitalism do not occur

without cause or provocation; and before we commit ourselves irreconcilably to an attitude of hostility to this movement of the time, we ought frankly to put to ourselves the question, ‘Is the capitalistic system unimpeachable?’ which is another way of asking, ‘Have capitalists generally used their power for the benefit of the countries in which their capital is employed and for the benefit of their fellow men.’ ” (*The Road Away from Revolution*, by Woodrow Wilson.)

Impeachment of Capitalism Not New

European scholars, as we pointed out a few chapters back, have been saying these things for decades now past; but we American Catholics are so hopelessly timid, insular and archaic in our teaching of industrial ethics, that unless the encyclical teaching of even a pope were incorporated explicitly the writer may be thought to have harbored bolshevistic tenets! We will let the most cultured, educated and Catholic layman in England (and would that we had a few of his tribe in every community), speak to the point: “Consider in what way the industrial system developed upon capitalist lines. Why were a few rich men put with such ease into possession of the new methods? Why was it normal and natural in their eyes and in that of contemporary society that those who produced the new wealth with the new machinery should be proletarian and dispossessed? Simply because the England upon which the new discoveries had come was already an England owned as to its soil and accumulations of wealth by a small minority; it was already an England in which perhaps half of the whole population was proletarian, and a medium for exploitation ready to hand.” (*The Servile State*, Hilaire Belloc, p. 72.)

After the new mechanical power-driven inventions had made their appearance, whenever any of the new industries had to be capitalized, accumulated wealth had to be found to support proletarian labor in the process of production, until the market returns for the finished product were realized. The human agents had to be fed, clothed and housed, and the new machinery and factories that were to work on the raw materials of manufacturing enterprises had to be purchased for sums of money and credit hitherto undreamed of. If property had been well and evenly distributed, protected by co-operative guilds as in other times it had been, fenced round and supported by the Catholic customs of the good old days, and guarded by the democratic autonomy and self-respecting status of great artisan corporations, these vast sums of accumulated wealth, now necessary for the successful financing of each new method of production, would have been at hand in the corporate wealth of the innumerable mass of small owners. The corporations formed by their combined parcels of wealth would have furnished the necessary capitalization for the new and complex processes of production. The men of England, already

owners of property, would have increased, indeed, as one invention followed another, the total wealth of the community without interfering with the just balance of equitable distribution.

Just Balance Destroyed

Instead of this just and happy balance, the new Reformation capitalistic principle triumphed all along the line of English industrial enterprise, *viz.*: The idea of a few employing owners and a mass of employed non-owners working as their goods and chattels for a paltry wage. The great mechanical inventions of the end of the eighteenth century would have blest and benefited mankind if they were introduced into a Christian industrial democracy like that of the most mediaeval thirteenth century; happening, as they did, to fall upon the diseased moral social structure of the enlightened eighteenth, they proved an unmitigated curse.

It could not, humanly speaking, happen otherwise, seeing what had been done by the promoters of the new religion in the England of the two preceding centuries. The small owner had long since disappeared from the landscape of Merrie England. The corporate life and mutual obligations which had supported and confirmed him as an owner of some piece of the soil of old England had been destroyed, not by any cruel necessity of any law of economic development, but the deliberate action of the men who were enriched by the robbery and plunder of the old Church, which preached this corporate life and stood by to enforce these mutual moral obligations.

They began by making him poor. They went on to make him ignorant by destroying the support of his schools, and closing to his children the old Catholic universities of the land. If industry was to be carried on in the grand scale made possible by the new inventions, the accumulated wealth necessary to launch it forth could be found nowhere else than at the hands of the few rich men who had already, in an evil day for the masses of England's population, monopolized by force and fraud the bulk of the means of production in England. There was capital. Where was labor?

The human energy necessary for the factories and mines, the docks and ships of empire, was at hand also as a direct result of Church property confiscation. It was weak and ignorant. It was desperately necessitous, indefinitely exploitable, ready to work on any terms if it were supplied with enough food and clothing to keep it alive. In other words, there was present the great propertyless proletariat of England at the mercy of its great plutocracy which had cornered the wealth of the country after the Reformation, and which had deprived the mass of English men of any ownership in the implements of production, of houses, and of land. Co-operative tradition was dead. A great fissure broad and deep already existed

between the man who owned capital and the masses of men who were labor. The only end of this new rich class was private gain. Competition was the only law of the new life. Avarice became the crowning virtue in proportion as it was in bygone times the capital sin of society.

Where Labor Was to Be Found

Labor would be found to work the new machine in the new factory where it was cheapest, among the proletariat. Its exploitation by the capitalist increased his gains and enabled him with increasing deadliness to crush out the few remaining small owners of private property and to send themselves and their children to work for him likewise, another addition to the great dispossessed proletarian mass. This was the way that the industrial revolution was canalized by the masters of historic capitalism. The streams of plenty which it caused to gush forth nourished only the fields of capital inherited from former generations, and brought new accumulations of wealth to those alone who had already possessed themselves of the vast bulk of the sources of production and subsistence.

Not only in the field of industry proper, but in other spheres also, economic oligarchy became supreme. The big landowners, of set purpose, deliberately destroyed the age-long right of the common man to the common land. There was no law or no central government strong enough to restrain this avaricious plutocracy. The mechanism of legislation and information became what it remains to this day, the tool of a triumphant capitalism.

So intrenched have these social heresies of post-Reformation days become now, even in the mental makeup of Catholics, that no other structure of the social organism can be conceived, but that in which the few shall own property and the vast majority shall live forever under them as wage earners. So dead have we become to every noble pulse inspired by the message of our Church, with regard to its irrevocable stand for private property and economic freedom.

People Must Become Owners

The hands of the clock must be pushed back 400 years. The masses of the people must somehow become owners of land or of the means and implements of production. So teach the American hierarchy in their program of social reconstruction.

“Nevertheless, the full possibilities of increased production will not be realized so long as the vast majority of the workers remain mere wage-earners. The majority must somehow become owners, or at least in part, of the instruments of production. They can be enabled to reach this stage gradually through co-operative

productive societies and co-partnership arrangements. In the former, the workers own and manage the industries themselves; in the latter they own a substantial part of the corporate stock and exercise a reasonable share in the management. However slow the attainment of these ends, they will have to be reached before we can have a thoroughly efficient system of production, or an industrial and social order that will be secure from the danger of revolution.” (*Program of Social Reconstruction*, 1919.)

Or, as Belloc very succinctly puts the same great saving Catholic truth, “We all feel – and those of us who have analyzed the matter not only feel but know – that the capitalist society, thus gradually developed from its origins in the capture of the land 400 years ago, has reached its term. It is almost self-evident that it cannot continue in the form which now three generations have known, and it is equally self-evident that some solution must be found for the intolerable and increasing instability with which it has poisoned our lives.” (*The Servile State*, p. 77.)

The teaching of the reformers must be first untaught. Then will the deeds of the reformers be undone. What can be expected at present as long as the social and industrial viewpoint of the average Catholic is more than half Protestant?

“Henceforth the Catholic Church was coerced by the necessities of the case to adopt a defensive attitude towards innovations of thought; in its fear of being accused of countenancing heretical opinions, it was frequently driven to display a caution which was liable to be confounded with obscurantism; and the fine energy which it had employed in the Middle Ages in the development of the intellectual and social progress was diverted to the more exact definition of its doctrines and the enforcement of the discipline of its members. The Reformation was directly responsible for whatever there is of narrowness or reactionism in modern Catholicism.” (*An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation*, George O’Brien, pp. 174-175.)

Article XLII

Capitalism and Socialism Alike the Bastard Offspring of a Servile Economic System

To sum up the main points in our thesis, then, may be useful and clarifying. The conclusion we drew is not our own private opinion. It has been drawn already by popes and scholars, theologians and statesmen, clerics and laymen. It is this, that the evils which are so evident in society today have their roots in the Reformation teaching of four hundred years ago. Capitalism and Socialism are alike the bastard offspring of a soulless economic system, which with all its evils is a direct outcome of renaissance and Reformation principles worked out into social practice. We will not insist on the point, whether the Reformation itself was not primarily more an

economic than a religious revolution. Both the religious and economic revolutions had their origin in a common autocracy foreign to every concept of industrial and Catholic democracy.

Powerful secular lords were greedy and ambitious to grasp the wealth of the Church and the guilds, so under a cloak of hypocrisy they manifested an unholy zeal for the interests of the Church and of religion. Ostensibly their motives were the same as that of the pious Henry VIII, Defender of the Faith, “to purge the Church from the thorns of vices and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue.”

We know the result. Today no honest historian pretends to defend their actions or their intentions. Even Harnack has written that the poor instead of being liberated and relieved were the real sufferers by the change of religious belief. Henceforth absolutism and tyranny were the sole arbiters of action, writes Dr. Cram. Intelligent and impartial Protestant students of history admit this claim now, and take no offense at the charges levelled against the spirit of the reformers. Would that the historic and economic ignorance so prevalent among certain classes among ourselves, who pretend to be educated, could also be removed. Then we would not be sickened at heart by seeing the socially ambitious of the household, itching for moral concessions, and aping even from afar the manners and customs of the secular and irreligious world of today, as to their shame they so often glory in doing.

Pre-Reformation Abuses

And as intelligent Catholics we will also admit that grave abuses existed here and there prior to the Reformation. These, of course, were not due to the doctrines of the Church, nor were they a reflection of her spirit, which would then, as ever before, produce the great results we have delineated in these lectures, but rather to the fact of state and secular encroachment on ecclesiastical jurisdiction, which lead to unworthy clerics being intruded into high places by temporal princes in spite of the wishes and efforts of Church authorities. They turned out to be, as was expected, mere ecclesiastical lords, even though styled “lords spiritual,” who were strangers to the true spirit of Catholic churchmen, and so did worldliness insidiously creep into the sanctuary, into the cloistered abbey and convent; and though the world was still Christendom, these disorders were nevertheless an abomination of desolation in the holy place.

The fault was one of politics rather than religion. As Cardinal Gasquet writes: “The bishops were rich with some honorable exceptions, chosen by royal favor rather than for spiritual qualifications. However personally good they may have been, they were not ideal pastors of their flocks. Place seeking often kept many of the lords spiritual at court, that they might gain or maintain influence sufficient to

support their claims to further preferments. The occupation of bishops overmuch in the affairs of the nation, besides its evident effect on the state or clerical discipline, had another result. It created in the minds of the new nobility a jealous opposition to ecclesiastics, and a readiness to humble the power of the Church by passing measures in restraint of its ancient liberties.” (Gasquet, *The Last Abbot of Glastonbury*, pp. 25-26.)

Church Not Blameworthy

Avarice was the besetting sin of the Reformation era. Moral delinquencies were not wanting, of course, in men who were thrust into ecclesiastical positions without a divine vocation to observe their obligations. The Church was not responsible. Rather it was the unwarranted interference of the state with a jurisdiction to which, then or now, it had no right, that was responsible for the evils that afflicted the Church prior to the Reformation.

This bad condition, however, was not so widespread as the old school of historians would lead one to believe. Sanctity did not depart from the religious house because the state placed a lax lord as the mitred abbot of its community. Granting all this, the remedy for these evils was not in the so-called Reformation. The moral character of the reformers made them wholly incapable of reforming anything, *e. g.*, Henry VIII, his virgin daughter Elizabeth, Luther, Calvin, Knox, etc. The reform could only come from its only true source, the Catholic religion that wilful and haughty men in all the circumstance of pomp and power were deliberately ignoring. The suppression of Catholicity by force and fraud only brought on still greater evils that have afflicted the world since, and are most acutely felt in our own day.

Towards Rome

Even the gloomy Dean of St. Paul’s allows this solitary ray of lonely light to brighten the dark horizons which he sees hemming in the field of European civilization. “Even more significant is the disposition to turn towards Rome, whenever a nation feels itself to be in danger of internal disruption. In France, between 1871 and 1914, there was a revulsion against the ‘ideas of 1789,’ under which the country seemed to be disintegrating, and a disposition to look for national redemption to what was sometimes called the hierarchical idea. This movement was especially represented by men of letters, several of whom rallied to Catholicism, more, it would seem, from patriotism than from real religious conviction. They believed that the Church was the only force which could consolidate the nation and check fissiparous tendencies. So Heiler quotes ‘one of

the most distinguished liberal theologians in Germany' as saying: 'The Catholic Church is the only salvation for our poor fatherland.' The real strength of the Roman Church lies in its wonderful organization. It is quite possible that if international revolutionary conspiracies become really menacing, European civilization may find no other protector than 'the Black International,' 'round which all supporters of law and order may, in terror of a general upheaval, gather themselves. If this ever happens, the Church will once more have the support of the educated portion of society, and may even ally itself again with humanism and science, and so recover from the blunders of the last four centuries.'" ("Catholicism at the Cross Roads," by the Very Rev. the Dean of St. Paul's, *The Quarterly Review*, July 1923.)

Notice the logic of the Very Rev. Dean. Four hundred years of the reformed religion have brought European civilization to the brink of the abyss. European civilization may find no other protector to save it from all this Reformation culture, and science, and progress, than "The Black International," the Roman Church. If this happens, Christendom may be a reality again. We would indeed be forced to cry out about our blunders of the last four hundred years, as the Church herself sings of the primeval fall, "O Felix Culpa."

It was by this sort of Anglo-Saxon logic (now Nordic!) that generation after generation was made to believe, by the shameless fiction of lying historians and Protestant apologists, until it has become an accepted fact bred in the bone, "that the Reformation, the suppression of the monasteries, etc., were goodly acts that formed the everlasting cornerstone of modern civilization." They were, indeed, its cornerstones, but people were fooled into calling it civilization. The beauty, truth, and love of the Middle Ages, due to the unity of Catholic faith and the saving grace of Catholic practice, were entirely swept away by the Reformation, through the agency of autocratic rulers. The common people fell a prey to their merciless greed and were by them handed over to a still more merciless autocracy of capitalistic greed and avarice.

Royal Robbers

The lords became wealthy through the robbing of the monasteries by Henry VIII, and the poor were robbed by the confiscations of Henry and Edward VI. The Church and guild property was looted, all of which had been devoted to religion and charity. The same things happened to Germany as to England. These two pious Reformation kings took over all these properties by two compulsory acts of parliament, and divided them up among their friends and relatives. This royal robbery of these reformed Anglo-Saxon kings killed the influence for good of these orders, churches and guilds. In order to raise revenue by taxes, Elizabeth

granted patents for monopolies and trades, and for the control of same. Capitalistic societies in this way took the place of the suppressed guilds of the Catholic days. Political autocracy, the divine right of kings, a particularly Protestant doctrine, and individualistic capitalism was the direct result of this pillage of property and power from the people by the crown and their parasitic subservient retainers.

Next came the invention of power-driven machinery which led to the factory system and industrial commercialism, by which the masses were ground down under the feet of this new and merciless idol. Religion and all ethical notions were now separated from the economic and material phases of life. "Under the Commonwealth in England (Cromwell's time), the Puritan tyranny in New England and the capitalistic autocracy in Great Britain, it was practically impossible to draw a line between Church and state; superficially, it seemed as if the identity, or rather co-operation, was more perfect than at any time during the Middle Ages. Certainly the abuses of power, the gross infractions of liberty, the negation of even rudimentary justice in legislation, in law, and in society, that followed from this apparent union, were more aggravated and intolerable. As a matter of fact, however, the alliance was only between a formal and public religion and the equally formal machinery of government; it did not extend to the individual, and here, in his domestic, social, business, and political relations, the severance was the most complete. The typical figure in Protestantism is Luther, preaching a lofty doctrine of union (personal) with God, and conniving at bigamy, adultery, and the massacre of starving peasants; and the pious iron-master or mill-magnate of Bradford or Leeds, zealously supporting his favorite form of Evangelicalism, pouring out his money for the support of missions to heathen countries or for the abolition of slavery, enforcing the strictest Sabbatarianism in his own household – fighting in parliament and through the press for the right to continue to employ little children of six years old in his mines, crawling on all fours, half naked, dragging carts of coal by ropes around their tender bodies, or to profit, by his threat of starvation through mill hands whose wages were a miserable pittance, insufficient to keep body and soul together, and who were forbidden under penalty of the law to combine with one another for self-protection." (*The Sins of the Fathers*, by Ralph Adams Cram, pp. 94-95.)

Condition Worse Than Slavery

The mine and factory laborer in the cities was thus reduced to a condition worse than slavery by Reformation capitalists. The same injustice was perpetrated on the land. Thousands and thousands of acres were turned into game preserves, and the farmers were forced, with their families, from the enclosed lands stolen from them, into the mine and the factory and the city slum. They were robbed of the land and

homes that their fathers before them had possessed for generations. In some cases they were sold like the cattle that grazed upon these green fields of old England.

The same thing took place on the continent. There was no Church any more to champion the rights of the poor and the workingman. Catholicity had disappeared as an influence. "Religion might have checked this spirit in one form or another by rescuing society from a materialistic interpretation, insisting on the conception of man as an end in himself dependently upon God, and refusing to surrender that revelation to any science of politics or any law of trade. Such a force was implicit in the mediaeval religion that had disappeared, good and bad elements alike, at the Reformation." (*The Town Laborer*, J. L. Hammond, 1760-1832.)

The new political and economic life knew nothing of moral law or sanction. The divine right of kings ruled the one, and economic determinism left no freedom for improvement in the other. The king could do no evil because God must be at the back of everything he did, and the people were his subjects who had no rights against the deeds or persons whom God, in His cruel providence, had directly placed to rule over and scourge them! The capitalist likewise could do what he wished with his own property without taking any notice whatsoever of the common good.

Teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas

The good old mediaeval doctrine of the thirteenth century, of St. Thomas Aquinas and incorporated into his great encyclical by Leo XIII, had no place in this scheme of things, viz., "Man should not consider his outward possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share with them without difficulty when others are in need." The social reconstruction Pastoral of the American Hierarchy expresses the mind of the ancient Church in like terms: "The laborer's right to a decent livelihood is the first moral charge upon industry. The employer has a right to get a reasonable living out of his business, but he has no right to interest on his investment until his employees have obtained at least living wages. This is the human and Christian, in contrast to the purely commercial and pagan, ethics of industry."

In insisting on these doctrines, therefore, and denouncing the purely commercial and pagan ethics of industry, we are not teaching a new doctrine, as ignorant, anti-Catholic, amateur ethicists, and self-constituted censors would fain have the common herd believe, but continuing the good tradition of better days and affirming anew the stand taken by the Catholic Church through all the ages.

Article XLIII

Is This the Greatest Age the World Has Ever Seen?

Uneducated people, and they are the big majority today, think for some reason or other, or oftenest for no reason at all, that we are living in the greatest age the world has ever known. One of the most ignorant reasons for this stupid attitude of mind that we have come across, is that any other attitude is considered highly un-American. We rule this foolish reason out of court at once, because there seems to us no intrinsic necessity for linking American citizenship and idiocy. Next to this most absurd reason comes the popular delusion that we must be the most civilized people that ever lived because we are living in the twentieth century. The reason for the twentieth being the greatest of centuries is, that it followed the nineteenth. Therefore, had we even to suffer the spectacle of frenzied pulpit orators ecstatically saluting its nascent star! Every schoolboy knows that science and education made greater progress during the nineteenth century than was made in all the years of the preceding eighteen! Modern education itself must be responsible for this alarming mental condition of every school boy's intellectual equipment!

Still, when writing on economic subjects especially, one must always reckon with this appalling and baffling manifestation of subnormal and retarded mental and moral growth. A studied economy of truthfulness may become a criterion of morality for the amateur ethician, nevertheless it is a deadly poison vitiating social intercourse, even though it may be the aristocratic and social dogma that characterizes the present religion of polite society. The real facts of economic history prove that the so-called centuries of progress and enlightenment were the most degrading and coarsening on the masses that make up Anglo-Saxon civilization, which once proudly boasted the patronymic Teutonic, now abandoned under the cultural stress of our 100% proclivities for the more patriotic and berserker Nordic, which even Deniker himself admits may have been "blond dolichocephalic" of Celtic origin!

Freedom from Moral Restrictions

Freedom from all moral restrictions marked the coming of the new industrial order. The employment of land, capital, and labor, in any and every way, to make the greatest returns for the "captains of industry" was legitimate for the reformed Nordics. Utilitarianism became the Protestantism of this new sociology. How to make the best of both worlds for self and family was the aim of every practical Englishman. Philosophy and experience accepted as scientific political economy the doctrine of moral carelessness which taught that every man must fight for

himself and the hindmost be piously delivered up to His Satanic Majesty. The whole social administration was an instrument for class domination.

“Capitalism, unrestrained by acts of parliament, and unhindered by public opinion, entered upon an era of full freedom of contract and unrestricted competition, and the results which followed upon the mad rush for wealth supply materials for the pessimist and cynic who make human nature a synonym for all that is mean and selfish. Labor became a commodity to be bought and sold on the market. Conditions of life became secondary to the production of wealth.” (*The Industrial Revolution*, Beard, p. 57.)

Someone happily described the old domestic system of manufacture which had perished as “contentment spinning at the cottage door.” The apostate Nordics changed this dream of the poet into the squalor of the factory system. The factory buildings were rushed up by men who were ignorant of the very elements of the principles of sanitation. An effort of the imagination is required to believe that degenerate sons of the same great race were the builders of the Lancashire factory towns, only a few centuries removed in progress and scientific enlightenment from their superstitious fathers, who builded and adorned the Gothic cathedrals of England, still living as they were under the benighted influence of the old religion imported from the unprogressive Mediterranean basin.

Many of those unsightly factories are still standing. In their wild rush for wealth, nothing was thought of except space and covering for the machines, and barely, light and room enough for the operators to feed them. In these dizzy, dreary buildings, “choked with dust and worn with overwork, the English freemen enjoyed to the utmost the blessed privilege of freedom of contract.” Radcliffe tells us that “old barns, cart houses, and out-buildings of all descriptions were repaired; windows broken through the old blank walls, and all were fitted up for loom shops; new weavers’ cottages arose in every direction.” Bodily and mental comfort, health, security from dangerous machines, and moral decency, were hardly taken into consideration by the “captains of industry who were laying the foundations of England’s greatness.” The new “labor-saving machines” did not save the laborer who worked them, and proved disastrous to those thrown out of employment to wait “until the fluidity of labor had adjusted the equilibrium.” The horrors of the industrial conditions under unrestrained Capitalism outrival those of black slavery in America.

Conditions and Contrasts

“If the English worker died of starvation or was injured by accident in the mills, it mattered not to the employer, for he was not legally liable, and the worker’s place could be supplied from among the thousands ready to work for even a bare

subsistence. On the other hand, the body of the black slave was valuable to his master. Starvation or injury which diminished his power as a worker rendered him of less value to his owner, who was thus financially interested, at least, in some degree in the tolerable condition of his property. Contemporary reports, resolutions, personal accounts, and the Blue Books are so terrible that the reader today can scarcely believe that such ghastly stories of inhuman and infernal treatment can have a shadow of truth. For more than fifty years the reign of terror held sway in the peaceful walks of industry – a reign of terror that rivals that of the French Revolution, because it was long, so coolly accepted, and even defended by political economists and servants of the Man of Galilee.” (Beard, op. cit. pp. 58-59.)

The Puritans and the landlords now certainly had their way. This is a picture of the civilization that replaced mediaevalism at their hands in Merrie England. They certainly did love democracy, did they not? There were no labor unions in those days to replace the guilds of Catholic times. See how nice and kind the capitalists were to their employees when there was no such radical socialistic thing as collective bargaining! The poor people were enjoying all the blessings of the open shop, and the anticipated happiness of that panacea for all labor troubles, “the American plan!” And mind well, this was a Puritan as well as a plutocratic tyranny that ground down the once free men of England into this industrial slavery. And it began, just where we said it did begin, after the overthrow of the Catholic religion in England, and it will continue in England, puritan and plutocratic, as well as in every country that has stamped upon it this same Anglo-Saxon genius, until they are again Catholic and reunited with Christendom.

The Cause of Socialism

But our aim in recounting the horrible conditions is to demonstrate that Socialism has a cause, and that cause is none other than the brutal crimes of post-Reformation godless capitalism which itself was a direct result of Reformation social and economic teaching. As ex-President Wilson says: “There must be some real ground for the universal unrest and perturbation . . . It probably lies deep at the sources of the spiritual life of our time.” And as far as the Russian Revolution went, he does not hesitate to name its real cause. “It was due to the systematic denial to the great body of Russians of the rights and privileges which all normal men desire and must have if they are to be contented and within reach of happiness.” And to be more specific, the Great War president declares: “It was capitalism that made them see red, and it is against capitalism under one name or another that the discontented classes everywhere draw their indictment.” (*The Road Away from Revolution*, by Woodrow Wilson.)

The roots “of the evils which,” according to Leo XIII, “now overwhelm us, and the evils which we so greatly fear,” go away back to the beginning of modern Anglo-Saxon civilization which began with Henry VIII and completely dominated English life after the overthrow of Charles I. “With the defeat of Charles the old order came to an end. Nothing now stood in the way of business and enterprise, sweating and mechanical industry. The mind of the Puritan was hard and mechanical, devoid alike of any love for beauty or human sympathy.

“The Puritans were in the main recruited from the trading classes of the community, and denounced the restrictions which Charles imposed on machinery as an interference with personal liberty. Any thought of putting a boundary to mechanical development was to them insufferable tyranny, and there can be little doubt that the attitude of the Stuarts towards machinery and their attempts to stem the tide of capitalist industry was a chief contributory cause of the Civil War. Their interferences naturally gave rise to discontent among men whose ruling passion was that of avarice and whose natures were so corrupted as to exalt this besetting sin of theirs to the level of a virtue, celebrated at a later day by Samuel Smiles. This perversion of the nature of the Puritan is to be attributed to the fact that he denied himself all the normal pleasures of life. He was cruel to himself, and so he found no difficulty in being cruel to others, especially when it was of assistance to him in the making of money.

“It was because the industrial revolution was dominated by the Puritan spirit that it was so relentless in its cruelty. When we read of the terrible conditions of factory life in Lancashire during this period, of workers locked in factories, of the heartless exploitation of women and young children, of the ceaseless day and night work, of children working by relays and sleeping in filthy beds that were never allowed to cool, of weary hands and feet following rapidly the quick movements of the never-tiring machines, we realize that it was dominated by men who had become dehumanized, and that the personal independence of the workers must have entirely disappeared, for no class of human beings would consent to submit to such conditions who retained a scrap of independence.

“It was not until 1832 that the factory working day was reduced to twelve hours and to ten hours in 1847. It was not without good reason that at Ashton in 1831 it was declared ‘that the negroes were slaves in name but the factory employees were slaves in reality.’ ” (*A Guildsman’s Interpretation of History*, Pentty, pp. 240-241.) (*The Town Laborer, 1760-1832*, by J. L. and Barbara Hammond, p. 18.)

Conditions of Industry

These brutalizing conditions in English industry were duplicated wherever industrialism had gained a hold. It is a well-known fact that the Prussian

government of yesterday deliberately dispossessed the Polish peasants of their lands in order to insure a cheap and plentiful supply of labor for German factories. And we one hundred per cent Americans, under the democratic folds of the Star Spangled Banner, still exploit the cheap labor of southern and eastern Europeans. Even while we write these lines, child labor is being exploited in American cotton mills almost as mercilessly as it was in England before the passing of the factory acts. Although it is Constitution Week as we write this, and we feel in our bones that it is worse than high treason not to keep tune with the ranting chorus of super-patriots who cannot see a smallest flaw in that important document, still we are so rash as to venture the opinion that since the fundamental law of our country has been so amended as to make it unconstitutional and highly un-American for the twelve-hour day steel worker in the blast furnaces of Pittsburgh to quaff a more than one-half-of-one-per-cent glass of beer in the privacy of his slum residence after his hard, hot day, how can it be so terribly radical, un-American, and foreign to hope that another amendment may some day be written in, that will set free the two millions of child laborers who wear away their little young lives in the mines and quarries and cotton mills of America, because some pious patriotic plutocrat is possessed with the greed to multiply his millions at the expense of the life-blood of these poor, helpless, male and female little American citizens whom he now forces constitutionally to supply him with their tender labor at the lowest possible cost regardless of the law of God, of nature, or of man?

Great patriots, who we believe keep the stars and stripes floating all of the seven days of the working week over their factories, employ child labor because it is cheap and unresisting, and because it has no unions to bargain for it advantageously. Star of the century that tolerates such inhumanity, in the name of progress and of civilization, we refuse to salute thee!

Article XLIV

Did Machinery Abolish Drudgery or Create It?

Another persistent popular delusion, especially in America, is that the invention of machinery relieved human labor of all drudgery. The facts, as is usual with most modern popular beliefs, are all the other way. More than a century ago, Dr. Aikin observed that machinery did not shorten the hours of the working day, and instead of releasing man from drudgery it only compelled his wife and children to come into the factories to share his drudgery with him, leaving the home more or less to take care of itself.

Especially did the machines introduce the little children into the cotton mills, a nice healthful place for a little tender Anglo-Saxon or budding American citizen of either sex. They also called in thousands that could have enjoyed a beautiful idyllic

open-air existence away out in God's open places, in all the rich but now enclosed lands that were once the ancestral acres of England's Catholic freemen. Those that were driven from the shelter of the old roof-tree, and the warm glow and welcome of the old fireside, into the poor-house that replaced the monasteries in Reformation England, were found useful now in supplying cheap slave labor to tend the new machines of the evangelically tender hearted captains of industry, who were piling up huge fortunes by the exploitation of pauperism and ignorance in England, and making big donations to missionary Bible societies who were bringing the message of the lowly Nazarene into the uttermost parts of the empire, upon which the sun, shining alike upon the just and the unjust, never sets, although its huge savage populations were still sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, until Anglo-Saxon capitalists discovered a huge source of wealth in covering their physical, mental and moral nakedness with cheap cotton, manufactured by infant and female labor in the factories of Lancashire, who verily bore the white man's burden, as they wore out their young tender lives as the slaves of industrial and commercial progress and machinery.

English Wealth and Poverty

Untold wealth and riches and luxury flowed into England from every corner of the Earth, and still the number of her dispossessed paupers increased. "The outstanding and entirely unexpected result of the capitalist organization of society is the widespread penury that it produces in the nation. A whole century of experience, in the most advanced civilizations of Europe and America alike, reveals this widespread penury as the outcome, or at least the invariable concomitant, of the divorce of the mass of the people from the ownership of the instruments of production; and of the aggregation, which has everywhere occurred, of this ownership in a relatively small propertied class." (*The Decay of Capitalist Civilization*, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, p. 3.)

The mill owners of the last quarter of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century arranged with the overseers of the poor and selected the best of the inspected paupers, shipped them to the factories and had them wear out their miserable lives as slaves of machinery. A class of regular traders in this cheap human flesh sprung up, who acted as brokers to supply paupers for the new mills of industrial England. As soon as the mill proprietors got hold of the children, "they were simply at the mercy of their owners, nominally as apprentices, but in reality as mere slaves, who got no wages, and whom it was not worth while even to feed or cloth properly, because they were so cheap, and their places could be so easily supplied."

The great boon of the new age of power-driven machinery made these little English slaves work day and night in relays. We are told by those who investigated the inhuman conditions under which they worked that the beds in which they slept never cooled, "one batch following another in turn for its share of rest in the filthy rag piles," called beds. In the parliamentary reports we read of children being knocked down and beaten as many as ten times a day; of boys working in heated glass factories, and being rewarded for negligence or failure to please the brutal overseer by severe beatings with irons. Children less than five years of age were found at work in coal mines, while in the pen factories, lads five years old were worked at full capacity for twelve hours a day.

The story of adult labor is no less horrifying than that of child labor. Men and women were often worked just as long as the utmost limits of physical endurance would permit. Sanitary arrangements were generally of the most indecent sort, and diseases and malformations were prevalent. The parliamentary report of 1833 classifies the sources of unhealthiness among the workers as follows: confinement; heated, close atmosphere; admission of foreign matter into the lungs, constant upright position; wet feet and person in wet spinnings; hurried eatings; sudden transitions of temperature; accidents from machinery; syphilitic taint; want of cleanliness; gas lights in closed rooms in winter; personal labor the only means of support; attention obliged to be as unrelenting as the motion of the steam engine.

Awful Conditions of Labor in England

"We hear of children and young people in factories overworked and beaten as if they were slaves; of diseases and distortions only found in the manufacturing districts; of filthy, wretched homes where people huddle together like beasts; we hear of girls and women working underground in the dark recesses of the coal mines, dragging loads of coal in cars in places where no horses could go, and harnessed and crawling along the subterranean pathways like beasts of burden. Everywhere we find cruelty and oppression, and in many cases the workmen were but slaves, bound to fulfill their master's commands under fear of dismissal and starvation." A Manchester writer said, in 1842: "I never behold a poor factory child, but I instinctively picture to myself the misery which this cursed system (factory) entails upon the human family. I was once in the habit of visiting the hand-loom weavers, about ten or twelve years ago, and I invariably found them a happy and contented people; their cottages were comfortable homes; they had hours of relaxation, and gardens for profit and amusement, but now factories are at work in these districts in which they resided, and poverty, wretchedness, and discontent are the inmates of every dwelling." (*The Industrial Revolution*, Beard, pp. 59-61.)

And this is the boasted progress of the nineteenth century! And this is Anglo-Saxon civilization! And this is what science and invention did for the workers of England! And this is how power-driven machinery relieved human labor of all drudgery! And lastly, this is that liberty that the reformers brought to the poor priest-ridden guildsmen of mediaeval England!

Comparing the Old and the New

In the good old Catholic days, when there were scarcely any mechanical appliances, there were no vast industrial armies. Neither was there any need that these armies should be herded together around the huge factories erected to house the engines and machines made possible by the application of coal and water to locomotion. The homes of the old honest Catholic workers were scattered throughout a thousand hamlets over the fair face of the old England. Manufacturing and agriculture were nearly always combined. But when the industrial revolution took place, there was ushered in, necessarily, an age of specialization, of organization, and division of labor. The spinning wheels and hand looms of the cottage workers could no more compete and the old craftsmen were forced to come into the new rising towns that housed the laborers, that flocked around the owners of the new power-driven machines.

Up to a certain point the new capitalists saw an advantage in the large dingy mill. They saw that there was economy in large production and centralization of the processes connected with a particular industry in a single locality. Therefore there sprang up thousands of cheap lodging houses around the immense manufacturing plants. These miserable dreary boarding houses were now the homes of the freemen of England. No wonder the home, that impregnable fortress of the family, the very basic unit of the national life, is passing away. How could it be otherwise? There was no sanitary science taken into account in the planning of these mushroom industrial towns. The plutocratic mill owners lived in mansions away out in the suburbs in fashionable exclusive residence districts, as far away as they could get from the mere proletariat. Their contractors threw together enough brick and mortar and stone, in the form of a house so that it looked something like a human habitation. It was uncomfortable, and no provision was made for even the rudimentary requirements of common decency. It was neither artistic, sanitary, social nor moral. It was just what you would expect from an owner whose whole aim in life was the making of money.

Healthy, Happy Humans

Anyhow, the making of healthy, happy human beings was no part of the plan which occupied the minds of the new aristocracy. The spiritual guides of the people were fine conservative fellows who believed in all the rights of holy property, and cared little for the sufferings endured by those who were now involuntarily determined to be espoused during the term of their earthly life to a grinding, pinching poverty. They were satisfied to allow the lower orders of the population to live in a world turned into a living Hell, because if the poor proletariat submitted meekly and patiently to their hard lot they might enjoy Paradise in the life to come. The mediaeval towns were gone with the mediaeval civilization which gave them birth. The new towns were now factory sites with a huge agglomeration of unsightly pens for the shelter of the workers.

And still all this misery and squalor was the direct result of false economic teaching that had superseded mediaeval economic theory. What was the Christian teaching in the Middle Ages on the economic relations of man to man? Wherein did it differ from the political economy taught in schools and colleges in the nineteenth century?

Mediaeval Teaching

“The first thing to note is that scientific economics as such were unknown to the great mediaeval teachers, for whom economics did not exist as a separate study. Much was written on labor, property, usury, and trade; but all these things were subject to the laws of justice and charity, and the economic relations of man to man were governed by the Christian teaching on morals.

“Our modern political economy is something entirely different from this, for it distinctly and definitely excludes the moral question. It is primarily concerned with the methods of wealth production, and declares wealth to consist in material things that will find a purchaser in the market. In spite of protests against this modern political economy, voiced eloquently and clearly by Ruskin and others, Christian men and women in England, with the mass of their fellows, accepted the current economic teaching, knowing no better. It is only in quite recent years that we have been awakened to the knowledge that the shame of child labor in fields and factories, the rack-renting of the slums, the sweating of working women, the whole business, in short, of buying cheap to sell dear, and of contriving to live on the labor of others without working, so far from having Christian sanction is utterly repugnant to the morals of mediaeval Christendom.

“Against the political economy of capitalism, with its complete unconcern for the temporal health and eternal salvation of man, its denial of room for faith and

morals in commercial dwellings, and its false and inadequate philosophy of money-making as an end, we may place the principles of Christian economics set out by St. Thomas Aquinas, and haply find some help to right-thinking and just living. For while economic conditions change, as political constitutions change with the centuries, and many customs and habits once thought permanent dissolve and crumble with the passage of years, the eternal laws of justice and charity remain, and the Catholic Church remains – to its children, for all time, the interpreter of these laws. . . . The peculiar misfortune of our age has been the denial in economics of a common good and the substitution of a reckless pursuit of riches for the earlier following of justice. The modern text books of the school, the works of Mill, Marshall, and their disciples, offer no healing for the economic ills of nations. On the other hand, St. Thomas Aquinas not only enlightened the Middle Ages, the light he kindled still burns steadily today for all who seek the Kingdom of God.” (*Economics for Christians*, by Joseph Clayton, pp. 67-73.)

Article XLV

Industrialism in New England Like That of Old England

From what we have written in the two preceding articles, the reader will gather what sort of blessing came to the vast population of working England, from the introduction of capitalistic controlled power-driven machinery which is known to economic history as the “industrial revolution.” The same blessings attended its advent everywhere. In this respect New England is and has been no different from Old England. A strange paradox is, that evidently the richer a country becomes under this system, the more misery and pauperism exist side by side with the apparent prosperity. The decay of country life is the saddest feature of this industrial expansion.

A few years ago the Canadian Hierarchy issued a joint pastoral letter on this great evil so menacing to the fine Catholic spirit of the Dominion’s Catholic life. Something is being done in the United States also to curb the rush from the country to the great industrial centers. Physically and morally these huge urban aggregations are places that literally devour their inhabitants. It ought not be a new discovery. *The Deserted Village* appeared in the year 1770. After all the accumulated experience of the intervening one hundred and fifty odd years, can the real conditions be better described by any sociologist, than in this picture painted by the great Irish poet?

Ye friends of truth, ye statesmen who survey
The rich man’s joy increase, the poor’s decay,

'Tis yours to judge, how wide the limits stand
 Between a splendid and a happy land.
 Proud swells the tide with loads of freighted ore,
 And shouting folly hails them from the shore;
 Hordes e'en beyond the miser's wish abound.
 And rich men flock from all the world around.
 Yet count our gains. This wealth is but a name
 That leaves our useful products still the same,
 Not so the loss. The man of wealth and pride
 Takes up a space that many poor supplied;
 Space for his lake, his park's extended bounds,
 Space for his horses, equipage, and hounds;
 The robe that wraps his limbs in silken sloth,
 Has robbed the neighboring fields of half their growth;
 His seat where solitary sports are seen,
 Indignant spurns the cottage from the green;
 Around the world each needful product flies,
 For all the luxuries the world supplies.
 While thus the land, adorn'd for pleasure all,
 In barren splendor feebly waits the fall.

As some fair female, unadorned and plain,
 Secure to please while youth confirms her reign,
 Slights every borrow'd charm that dress supplies,
 Nor shares with art the triumph of her eyes;
 But when the charms are past, for charms are frail,
 When time advances, and when lovers fail,
 She then shines forth, solicitous to bless,
 In all the glaring impotence of dress.
 Thus fares the land, by luxury betray'd,
 In nature's simplest charms at first array'd,
 But verging to decline, its splendors rise,
 Its vistas strike, its palaces surprise;
 While, scourged by famine from the smiling land
 The mournful peasant leads his humble band;
 And while he sinks, without one arm to save,
 The country blooms – a garden, and a grave.

Away from the Land

And could a more mournful picture be drawn of the cruel economic pressure which drove the happy peasant from the soil, to pine away his life amid the cold artificial pomp of the city in which he had no share, than the following?

Where, then oh! where shall poverty reside,
 To 'scape the pressure of contiguous pride?
 If to some common's fenceless limits stray'd,
 He drives his flock to pick the scanty blade,
 Those fenceless fields the sons of wealth divide,
 And e'en the bare-worn common is denied.
 If to the city sped – What waits him there?
 To see profusion that he must not share;
 To see ten thousand baneful arts combined
 To pamper luxury and thin mankind;
 To see each joy the sons of pleasure know,
 Extorted from his fellow-creature's woe.
 Here, while the courtier glitters in brocade,
 There the pale artist plies the sickly trade;
 Here, while the proud their long-drawn pomps display,
 There the black gibbet glooms beside the way.
 The dome where pleasure holds her midnight reign,
 Here, richly deck'd admits the gorgeous train:
 Tumultuous grandeur crowds the blazing square,
 The rattling chariots clash, the torches glare.
 Sure scenes like these no troubles e'er annoy!
 Sure these denote one universal joy!
 Are these thy serious thoughts? Ah! turn thine eyes
 Where the poor houseless, shivering female lies.
 She once, perhaps, in village plenty bless'd,
 Has wept at tales of innocence distress'd;
 Her modest looks the cottage might adorn,
 Sweet as the primrose peeps beneath the thorn;
 Now lost to all, her friends, her virtue fled,
 Near her betrayer's door she lays her head,
 And pinched with cold, and shrinking from the shower,
 With heavy heart deplores that luckless hour,
 When idly first, ambitious of the town,
 She left her wheel and robes of country brown.

Heart-rending it must have been indeed for the poor people to tear themselves away from their native fields and cottages where, like their fathers gone before, they had enjoyed so many happy days.

Good heaven! what sorrow gloom'd that parting day
 That call'd them from their native walks away;
 When the poor exiles, every pleasure past,
 Hung round the bowers, and fondly looked their last,
 And took a long farewell, and wish'd in vain
 For seats like these beyond the western main;
 And, shuddering still to face the distant deep,
 Return'd and wept, and still return'd to weep;
 The good old sire the first prepared to go
 To new-found world, and wept for others' woe;
 But for himself, in conscious virtue brave,
 He only wish'd for worlds beyond the grave.
 His lovely daughter, lovely in her tears,
 The fond companion of his helpless years,
 Silent went next, neglectful of her charms,
 And left a lover's for her father's arms.
 With louder complaints the mother spoke her woes,
 And blessed the cot where every pleasure rose;
 And kissed her thoughtless babes with many a tear,
 And clasped them close, in sorrow doubly dear;
 Whilst her fond husband strove to lend relief,
 In all the silent manliness of grief.

O luxury! thou cursed by heaven's decree,
 How ill exchanged are things like these for thee!
 How do thy potions, with insidious joy,
 Diffuse their pleasures only to destroy!
 Kingdoms by thee, to sickly greatness grown,
 Boast of a fluid vigor not their own:
 At every draught more large and large they grow,
 A bloated mass of rank unwieldy woe;
 Till sapped their strength, and every part unsound,
 Down, down they sink, and spread a ruin round.

E'en now the devastation is begun,
 And half the business of destruction done;

E'en now, methinks, as pondering here I stand,
I see the rural virtues leave the land.

– *The Deserted Village*, Goldsmith.

Labor Not Shortened by Machinery

Gibbons tells us that persons of all ages and both sexes were collected together in huge buildings, under no moral control, with no arrangements for the preservation of health, comfort, or decency. The enormous extension of trade rendered extra work necessary, and the mills ran all night long as well as by day. The machines made “to shorten labor” resulted in many cases in vastly extending it; while in others again they took away all the means of livelihood from the old class of handworkers. Hence riots frequently occurred, and the laborers sought to destroy the new machinery; the struggle of what were called “the iron men” against human beings of flesh and blood long continued to be a source of controversy and complaint, more especially as the workmen saw that the profits made by these iron men went almost entirely into the hands of their masters.

Women and Girls in the Mills

Dr. Aikin, in a description of the country around Manchester, published in 1795, says that domestic life was seriously endangered by the extensive employment of women and girls in the mills, for they had become ignorant of all household duties. “The females are wholly uninstructed in knitting, sewing, and other domestic affairs requisite to make them frugal wives and mothers. This is a very great misfortune to them and to the public, as is sadly proved by a comparison of the laborers in husbandry, and those of manufacturers in general. In the former we meet with neatness, cleanliness, and comfort; in the latter with filth, rags, and poverty.”

He mentions also the prevalence of fevers among employees in cotton mills, as a result of the utterly unsanitary conditions under which the poor people labored. And worst of all, of course, was the condition of the little young and yet tenderly innocent children who were brought to labor in the new mills as apprentices. Their life was literally and without exaggeration simply that of slaves. So intolerably rotten were the conditions of child labor that even the dispossessed and pauperized parents who had been accustomed to the old family life had the greatest repugnance to send their children into these living Hells. Even among themselves it was considered the greatest disgrace when simple starvation forced them to do so. The epithet of “factory girl” was the most insulting that could be applied to a young woman, and girls who had once been in a factory could never find

employment elsewhere. When the wages of the workmen had been reduced to a starvation level they had no other alternative but to consent to their children and wives being employed in the factories, mines, and mills.

“But the manufacturers wanted labor by some means or other, and they got it. They got it from the workhouses. They sent for parish apprentices from all parts of England, and pretended to apprentice them to the new employments just introduced. The mill-owners systematically communicated with the overseers of the poor, who arranged a day for the inspection of pauper children. Those chosen by the manufacturers were then conveyed by wagons or canal boats to their destination, and from that moment were doomed to slavery.

“Sometimes regular traffickers would take the place of the manufacturer, and transfer a number of children to a factory district, and there keep them, generally in some dark cellar, till they could hand them over to mill-owners in want of hands, who would come and examine their height, strength, and bodily capacities, exactly as did the slave-dealers in the American markets. After that the children were simply at the mercy of their owners, nominally as apprentices, but in reality as mere slaves, who got no wages, and whom it was not worth while even to feed or clothe properly, because they were so cheap and their places could be so easily supplied.

“It was often arranged by the parish authorities, in order to get rid of imbeciles, that one idiot should be taken by the mill-owner with every twenty sane children. The fate of these unhappy idiots was even worse than that of the others. The secret of their final end has never been disclosed, but we can form some idea of their awful sufferings from the hardships of the other victims to capitalist greed and cruelty. Their treatment was most inhuman. The hours of their labor were only limited by exhaustion after many modes of torture had been unavailingly applied to force continued work. Children were often worked sixteen hours a day, by day and by night. Even Sunday was used as a convenient time to clean the machinery.” (*The Industrial History of England*, Gibbons. pp. 179-180.)

Picture of the Times

Samuel Kydd, the author of *The History of the Factory Movement*, draws a lurid picture of these times when Anglo-Saxon industrial capitalists were laying the rotten foundations of the progress and civilization of the nineteenth century. In stench, in heated rooms, amid the constant whirling of a thousand wheels, little fingers and little feet were kept in ceaseless action, forced into unnatural activity by blows from the heavy hands and feet of the merciless over-looker, and the infliction of bodily pain by instruments of punishment invented by the sharpened ingenuity of insatiable selfishness. They were served with the coarsest and

cheapest food, often with the same as that served out to the pigs of their masters. They slept in relays in filthy beds that were never allowed to cool; for one set of children were sent to sleep in them as soon as the others had gone off to their daily or nightly toil.

There was no discrimination of sexes; and disease, misery and vice grew as in a hotbed of contagion. Some of these miserable human beings tried to run away. To prevent their doing so, those suspected of this tendency had irons riveted on their ankles with long links reaching up to their hips, and were compelled to work and sleep in these chains, young women and girls as well as boys suffering this brutal treatment. Many died and were buried secretly at night in some desolate spot, lest people should notice the number of the graves; and many committed suicide. What a catalogue of cruelty and misery!

These facts are found not in the speeches of trade unionists, a body of men whom so many pious respectable people seem to fear so much, but in the cold methodical dry official language of parliamentary blue-books which is startled into life only by the awful misery it has to relate. It is an awful page in the history of civilization! Anglo-Saxons seem to have always been brazen hypocrites for while these horrors were the daily life of England, British capitalist philanthropists were shedding crocodile tears over the evils of black slavery, the same piously sentimental capitalists who had amassed fortunes from the grinding slave labor of England's own white slavery.

If there are any yet unconvinced of the fact that we are not living in the greatest civilization the world has ever known, their case is certainly a hopeless one. At least the most stupid saluter of modern stars will have to admit that Henry VIII and his reforming successors realized very little of the pious desire that animated their godly hearts when they stole the property of the mediaeval Church, "in order to purge it from the thorn of vices and to sow it with the seeds and plants of virtue."

Article XLVI

Socialism is a Revolt Primarily Against the Squalor and Misery of Industrialism

Our aim in recounting the barbarous conditions in which the masses of the working population existed, during the years that saw the great development of industrialism, is to show that Socialism is a revolt against these things, which it blames for the existence of these squalid conditions. It is only the superficial mind that will rave against a few individual Socialists and their writings, and say here is the source of all our modern unrest and revolutionary thought. Let us burn these books, and rail against their authors, let us put intellectual blinkers on the rising generation, and all will be peace and calm and holy quiet! Let us abuse Karl Marx, and Rodbertus, Ferdinand Lassalle, Proudhon, and Louis Blanc, Fourier, Saint-

Simon, and Robert Owen; and still let the same lips on every occasion sing the praises of modernism, of capitalism, of industrialism, and of the progress and culture and civilization of this glorious day of wars and rumors of wars, of famine and pestilence, of race hate and of a corrupt political democracy which we see dying in the dunghill of every capital in Europe.

No wonder that the Romanes lectures at Oxford in the year 1924 were delivered on the topic, "Are We Entering a Dark Age?" No wonder that men everywhere, who are thinking, are seeing the star of the twentieth century ushering in, not the golden rays heralding a new day, but the dying shafts that linger as the twilight of a dying civilization. There was a time when America had a constitution and when America respected its constitution. There was a time when America was the land of guaranteed religious freedom. There was a time when the American citizen was a lover of law and ordered liberty. If we thought a little more about our constitution, and shouted less about it, we would see what is happening in America today to that immortal document, and the liberties for which it stands. The heirs of those men who gave us a new birth of freedom are making of this palladium of democratic rights and privileges a mere scrap of paper. And strange thing, they are doing this under the influence of patriotic hysteria in the name of 100% Americanism. O Americanism! how many crimes are committed in thy name!

Significant Conditions in the World

"When the Russian revolution of 1905 was on, America shuddered at the tales of floggings in Czarist prisons; it rightly held flogging to be symbolic of the vilest barbarism. Today America is the classic land of the knout, the only home of lynchings. In Oklahoma, a military dictatorship, benevolent, perhaps, but still a military dictatorship, locks horns with a Fascist mob whose weapon is the torch, the faggot, and the Knout. . . . All through central Europe the intellectual classes are dying of slow starvation; students labor in mines; physicians, after a day of toil, are waiters or film operators at night; it is dangerous to speak German on the streets of Prague, or Ukrainian on those of Lemberg; one of the greatest of living German actresses is insulted on the streets of Berlin because of her slightly Jewish cast of features; a Catholic can hardly teach school in an Alabaman or Texan village; the roads from central and eastern Europe to Constantinople and Trieste swarm with ragged penniless Jewish students expelled from the Polish and Hungarian universities; the fugitives from Smyrna are smothering Athens, those from the east, Vienna and Berlin; our Negroes are being driven northward by the tens of thousands – they flee from insult, pogrom, the knout, and the stake. Jewish families that have passed long and honorable lives in southern communities find life increasingly difficult and friendless. White terror, Fascisti, Ku Klux Klanners –

these are but varying names for an engulfing wave of barbarism.” (*The Nation*, p. 426, Oct. 17.)

Professor Ramsay, in his work *The Church in the Roman Empire*, says that, “Christianity, if adopted in time, might have prevented the ruin of the empire.” Father Canavan, S. J., states that the Catholic Church today, sustained by an honorable tradition, “may be helping to ward off from European civilization some dreadful result similar to that in which the Roman empire closed.” (*Studies*, March, 1923, p. 77.) And a book has appeared from the pen of a German savant bearing the specific title *Untergang des Abendlandes* – “The Downfall of the West.” No book has created such a stir since Nietzsche’s *Zarathustra*. The well-known philosophical periodical *Logos* has devoted a whole number of 300 pages to the discussion of the book, its thesis, and its author, Oswald Spengler.

Handwriting on the Wall

While Catholic scholars were analyzing and criticising the barbarous tendencies of modern civilization, it was easy for the moderns and up-to-date ignorant Catholic thinkers to refute their arguments, by merely calling them “Mediaevalists,” but now that the logic of cold facts and historical happenings are crying out, so that even a German rationalist can read the handwriting on the wall, it is high time for all of us to inquire what brought this state of things about. It is a matter of vital importance for Catholic leaders. For how can they set about saving a civilization from death, to better advantage than finding out by a painstaking diagnosis what the malady afflicting it is, and just when the venerable patient first caught the deadly disease?

Again, as a matter of fact, real thinkers are all putting the finger of criticism on the same cancerous social sore. They have long since discovered that the challenge was not exactly between Catholic Christianity and unbelief, because nobody fights for a thing like absense of belief. It is too negative a thing to give rise to the enthusiasms necessary for carrying on warfare on a grand scale. Now it is easy to see that the really practical challenge to Christian morals did not come from materialist philosophy proximately, but rather from the materialist machine.

Somehow or other men are waking up to the fact that machinery was rendering Christianity obsolete, just as it has rendered handicraft obsolete. Writers outside the influence of Western civilization in our time have long been questioning western points of view. A Hindoo inquires of his civilizers, Nordic Anglo-Saxons, by the way:

What is This Civilization?

“What is this civilization, anyway? I have lived in four of its chief centers for about five years. During that time I have studied this civilization with the little light with which my Brahmin birth has blessed me. And I must confess that I have been deeply pained by the facts that study has revealed to me. This vaunted civilization has raised selfishness to a religious creed, Mammon to the throne of God, adulteration to a science, falsehood to a fine art . . . It has created artificial wants for man, and made him a slave of work to satisfy them; it has made him ever restless within and without, robbed him of leisure – the only friend of high thought. He knows no peace, hence he knows not himself nor his real object in life. It has made him a breathing, moving, hustling, fighting, spinning machine – ever working, never resting, never knowing even the refreshing rest of a sound sleep. It has made him a bag of live nerves ever stretched to high tension. It has sapped the foundation of home life – and its trunk separated from its roots, its roof-tree threatens to fall, shaken by each passing breeze. Its vulgar haste and love of sensation are invading even the realm of religion, which is being classed with fads and crazes. Its boasted scientific inventions have done more harm than good to humanity’s best and permanent interests; they serve only the surface of life which alone its votaries live and know.” (*The Light of Asia*, by Rab Bharati.)

The Factory System in India

We suppose the distinguished Indian had in mind the Swadeshi movement so closely allied with the introduction of capitalistic industrialism into India. The factory system is beginning to do for India what it has accomplished everywhere. A recent report of the Indian Factory commission states: “In daylight mills the average working time for the whole year is twelve hours and five minutes; in mills fitted with electric lights, thirteen to thirteen and a half hours.”

The report goes on to say: “In some provinces the law is ignored to an extent not hitherto imagined. The law referring to the half-hour’s recess is generally disregarded in rice mills, grinding factories and flour mills throughout India.”

But perhaps it is as a corrupter of political democracy, and a breeder of war on a savage scale, that the most telling indictment has been made against this machine-produced civilization of modern times. “Mechanism by its reactions on man and his environment is antagonistic to human welfare. It has destroyed industry and replaced it by mere labor; it has degraded and vulgarized the works of man; it has destroyed social unity and replaced it by social disintegration and class antagonism to an extent which directly threatens civilization; it has injuriously affected the structural type of society by developing its organization at the expense of the

individual; it has endowed the inferior man with political power which he employs to the common disadvantage by creating political institutions of a socially destructive type; and finally, by its reactions on the activities of war, it constitutes an agent for the wholesale destruction of man and his works and the extinction of human culture. It is thus strictly analogous to those anti-bodies by which the existence of aggregates of the lower organisms is brought to an end.” (*Social Decay and Regeneration*, by Dr. R. Austin Freeman, 1921.)

We are wasting good energy, then, that could be used to better advantage in some other channels, in attacking those who are revolting against the abuses of a system such as these men describe, and abusing them as being the authors of the present unrest, when as a matter of historic economic fact the new post-Reformation industrial machinery had been humming and pounding men, women and children to a living death for a long time, before the social conditions which it created aroused the earlier Socialists to the fact that a new world had been created, which in their own extreme way they wanted instinctively to destroy. They wanted to do this because, alas, for a long time also, no one else was making a serious attempt to ameliorate the sad conditions of the crushed and downtrodden workers, which the new capitalistic industrialism was reducing to a state worse than black slavery.

Amateur Ethicians and Political Economists

We did have amateur ethicicians and political economists by the hundreds who, as we have them with us today, were with vicious enlargements and interpretations, and a complete lack of moral honesty, opposed for selfish reasons to placing new restrictions on the rapidly developing industries. They followed the *laissez-faire* doctrines of Adam Smith’s economic theory, in the interests of the capitalistic and mill-owning classes. One reverend gentleman, Malthus, wrote: “We are bound in justice and honour to disclaim the right of the poor to support,” and added: “If parents desert their child, they ought not to be made answerable for the crime. The infant is, comparatively speaking, of little value to society, as others will immediately supply its place.”

The faculty of moral indignation against great and cruel wrongs and injustice was dead in the Church and clergy of the period under discussion. The exploited and unjustly dispossessed proletariat found champions nowhere. The Church and the state were one in their advocacy of the doctrines of enlightened self-interest. They discovered natural law in the social world of the time, holding the once free laborer in perpetual bondage. The conclusion of this respectable old school was that man was a helpless miserable creature, powerless to change economic laws.

Nature should be allowed to take its determined course grinding, starving, and eliminating the unfit.

The conditions of labor in the industrial world finally became simply unbearable. The common people had no voice in shaping industrial or public policy. When it became physically impossible for them to endure their terrible lot any longer, the agitation for factory legislation began, at first in occasional outbreaks expressing their deep-seated resentment at the iniquities of the new order, afterwards within the limits of legal and constitutional weapons. The tide had turned at last. Trade unionism was the laborer's first friend since the day when the mediaeval Catholic guilds of England were robbed and destroyed by the reformers. And they appealed back to the good Catholic traditions of an older day which Englishmen had loved long since, and lost awhile.

An Ancient Custom

"It has been an ancient custom in the kingdom of Great Britain for divers artists to meet together and unite themselves in societies to promote amity and true Christian charity." So pleaded the working tailors in 1760. Still trade unions were not legally recognized until the law of 1871.

"We observe with regret that in all the hard fights in which English trade unionism was involved, the clergy either remained apathetic or ranged themselves on the opposite side." (*Social Catholicism in England*, Dr. Karl Waninger, p. 176.) Lest it be misunderstood, they were a reformed clergy, high priests of respectability. In consequence of such an attitude on the part of the clergy and Anglican hierarchy, we can understand why a growing radicalism became current among the unions and the workers. In other words, we can understand why Socialism took the field for social reform.

CHAPTER V

THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL AND SOCIAL REFORM

Article XLVII

Beginnings of Social Reform

There are two kinds of humbugs, conscious humbugs, and unconscious humbugs. Nobody takes the first class seriously. They generally follow politics as a profession. But the second class are a real menace, especially in a democracy like the United States. For our own part, we get a lot of sheer amusement from the spoken reported utterances of the latter, and nowhere are they more unconsciously what we say they are, than when we discover them in the patriotic or civic throes of a tirade against Socialism, or bombastically dilating on modern progress and civilization.

The second class may be subdivided into male and female humbugs. In these days of fads and feminism, neither age nor sex can be invoked to shield the one or the other from the equal right to our merited criticism and contempt; for serious argument is thrown away, trying to educate or convince an unconscious humbug. After all that scholars have written on the economic, religious and moral effects of the Reformation, we were not surprised therefore to find that Catholic women have still two great and glorious figures, outstanding and shining models for the devout sex, held up before them, if not too ideal for their imitation, at least for their distant respectful love and admiration. Both of them, of course, of the good old Nordic Anglo-Saxon stock – the one a fierce and cruel persecutor – of the Catholic name, the bastard daughter of Henry VIII, Queen Elizabeth of England; the other, Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of the cult of Christian Science, which its fairest critics, from the standpoint of orthodoxy, condemn as being neither science nor Christian.

“Elizabeth of England will ever be the personification of an age that, as has been said, ‘for all its wrongs yet gilds the peaks of time.’ And speaking of a female contemporary of this virgin queen, Elizabeth, she is described as one, ‘who has been and always will be for all nations, the full blown rose of *the lovely civilization*

that gave her birth.’ ” We humbly wonder, as we ask in duly meek and intellectually genuflectuous awe, by what standards of excellence, of beauty, and of goodness Elizabethan civilization could be called lovely, or why the age that gave her birth could be said to gild the peaks of time – time on which has since shown down even the eloquently saluted apostrophic stars of the twentieth century?

But be of good hope, all ye of little faith. There is still with us much of the lovely, beautiful, and goodly feminine characteristics which once adorned Queen Bess, and the lovely civilization that gave her birth, for lo and behold, “in a materialistic age, the name of Mary Baker Eddy,” the speaker said, “was like a trumpet call to a higher and a more spiritual life.” At last our modern progress and civilization, even in this materialistic age, have belied the poet, by giving our tainted nature one more than a solitary boast. The Bible of Eddyism has given us a new magnificat. The mighty women of the Old and New Testament have been put down from their high places, because the gods whom we must now adore have exalted into their niches, Elizabeth of Old, and Mary Baker Eddy of New, England.

Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace: because mine eyes have seen this new gospel of salvation in the society columns of the Sunday papers which takes the place of high mass and vespers in these latter days, before the unliturgical face of our up-to-date, American, Christian and scientific people, who have heard perchance the trumpet call of Mary Baker Eddy calling to a higher and more spiritual life. A light indeed to the revelation of the gentiles, and the glory of thy people, hath arisen amongst us; for now at length fortified and strengthened by the example of Queen Elizabeth, and enlightened inwardly by the vagaries of Mary Baker Eddy, the feminists of America can go forward from the darkness and ignorance of the days whose Christian aspirations gave us only the sublime poetry of the *Stabat Mater* and the *Ave Maris Stella*, to this new and more perfect day whose rag-time soul and jazz-infected literary and artistic tastes have made a millionaire of the author of the doggerel “Yes, we have no bananas.” That’s that.

Elizabethan Legacy

Now to get down to the hard economic historic facts of the legacy bequeathed to us by this woman Elizabeth, and her equally nice and lovely father Henry VIII, and the beautiful civilization that gilds the peaks of time, by having given birth to this pair of royal and moral blotches, “spots of blood and grease on the pages of English history,” let us see on what mental food do our patriotic and civic Babbitts feed who are eternally saving the civilization that has at last canonized Queen Elizabeth and Mrs. Baker Eddy, by frantically denouncing men like Karl Marx and

the whole Socialist school, as being responsible for the unrest caused by the war between capital and labor, which has been urged ceaselessly since the day in 1815 when Robert Owen, the great and revered friend of English labor, and the toilers of the world, lifted his lone voice in public protest against the iniquities of the industrial system. And he lifted it alone because those who should have lifted theirs in condemnation of these iniquities were silent.

“Moreover in the great industrial struggle that ensued, the English clergy as a whole remained utterly apathetic. When in 1872 Joseph Arch opened his great propaganda for the formation of agricultural trade unions, they did not show the least understanding. Two clerical magistrates sent sixteen labourers’ wives (some with infants at the breast) to prison with hard labor for intimidating certain non-union men. And while Archbishop Manning (alone among ecclesiastical dignitaries) warmly supported Arch and showed his sympathy with the cause by appearing on the platform at the great meeting in Exeter hall, Dr. Ellicot, the Anglican Bishop of Gloucester, suggested the village horse pond as a fit destination for the ‘agitators.’ ” (*Social Catholicism in England*, pp. 176-177, see Webb, *The History of Trade Unionism*, pp. 317-318.)

Growing Radicalism

In consequence of such an attitude on the part of the clergy in the struggle for social reform, we can understand why a growing “radicalism” became current among the members of trade and labor unions. With such a clergy and such a hierarchy, is it any wonder that Anglicanism, with all its respectability, has lost the great masses of the English people? It is this indefensible and hopelessly stupid attitude of the clergy that is responsible at all times for much of the radical current and opposition to more constitutional methods found prevalent among the more extreme leaders of industrial and social reforms. Without the abuses of the capitalistic industrial system, and its blind, stupid, and reactionary apologists, the modern Socialist movement would cease to exist.

Socialist Tendency to Disintegration

“We do not think that anybody hopes at the present day that the reorganization of society can be achieved by Socialism. The fatal tendency to disintegration among Socialists themselves is sufficient to dispel any illusions that may have been harboured on this point. Besides, it must be remembered, as we pointed out above, that Socialism is but a reaction against the excesses of individualism which found its most perfect expression in the works of the classical economists; and a

movement which is merely a reaction in origin cannot hope to become a great constructive creed.

“If the abuses of capitalism were removed, the modern Socialist movement would sink to a position of insignificant importance. The creed necessary to institute a new organic period of society will not be found in Socialism any more than in capitalism; what is required is some system that will avoid the excesses of both these extremes. In Proudhon’s words, we require to find the synthesis between the thesis of political economy and the antithesis of Socialism.” (*Economic Effects of the Reformation*, Dr. O’Brien, p. 177.)

We can learn much, then, from historically reviewing the ebb and flow of this struggle for social reform begun only in the opening years of the nineteenth century. If we learn aright the lessons taught by that fierce labor struggle, the obstacles it has overcome, and the industrial iniquities it has wiped out, often single handed, we shall understand many things in the labor movement of our own times that will otherwise seem unwarranted, and we shall develop in our own minds an understanding sympathy with the whole labor movement, which in our moments of unregulated patriotic and civic fervour will stand us in good stead, and perhaps keep us in that calm, cool, philosophic mood which will save us from making egregious fools of ourselves every time we deliver ourselves of speeches on subjects we do not sufficiently understand. We shall save the judicious also from the shame and grief caused by our presumptuous audacity if we are Catholics, in interpreting the tenets of our own Church to our separated and toiling brethren, without first patiently studying and informing our own minds on her economic and social doctrines.

The Catholic Church and Labor

What the attitude of the Catholic Church is towards the labor movement is finely summarized by Monsignor Henry Parkinson, rector of Oscott college, England, in his *Primer of Social Science*. In the hope that this summary will fall into the hands of those that need the Church’s light and leading most, we will give it here in full.

“The countless associations of working men and masters called the craft guilds, which flourished for centuries in every part of Catholic Europe, were the main cause of the prosperity of the state during the Middle Ages. Their suppression in England, which began in the sixteenth century, and in France and other countries at a later date, sounded the knell of the independence and well-being of the working class. Still, even if they had survived the stress of the times, they would have required adaptation to the changed form and circumstances of all production. Such unions should be suited to the requirements of our own age – an age of wider education, of different habits, and of far more onerous requirements in daily life.

“The history of the slow recognition in our day of this bygone liberty is sad reading. Suffice it to say that the right to form a society is as radical as the right to establish a state, and no state may contravene it. The establishment of workmen’s unions is laid down by Leo XIII as one of the principal means for the readjustment of our social dismemberment. ‘It were greatly to be desired that they should become more numerous and more efficient.’ ‘They exist of their own right. They are private societies, existing within the bounds of the state, and are severally part of the state.’ ‘We may lay it down as a general and lasting law, that working men’s associations should be so organized and governed as to furnish the best and most suitable means for obtaining what is aimed at, that is to say, for helping each individual member to better his condition to the utmost in body, mind, and property.’ (*Rerum Novarum*.)

“The purely professional objects of the trade union are justified clearly by what has been said on the subject of association generally. Trade unions simply apply the instinct of comradeship and mutual support to the particular and pressing needs of men.

“Their aim is to protect the interests and to secure the equitable rights of the members. Their establishment has become necessary in presence of the overwhelming power of the employer. Hitherto the movement has been largely that of the better class of artisan. But combination has now advanced among the unskilled trades, and should be further extended through the ranks of the women workers.

“On these points the advantages of trade unions are decisive:

“(a) They are the protection of the weak.

“(b) They provide an effective means by which an employer may enter into a collective bargain or agreement with his work people.

“(c) A strong and ably directed union not only protects the men, but elicits and enjoys the confidence of the employer in view of the maintenance of agreements.

“The tendency of the trade union is and has been to maintain or raise wages, to reduce the hours of labor, and generally to preserve peace.”

Article XLVIII

The Catholic Attitude Toward Social Reform

Though by no means Anglophile, there is one English trait which we suggest Americans generally might copy with profit. It is a far-sighted, clear-visioned political wisdom. When there is no question of principle involved, it is certainly the part of reasonable common sense to know the limits of a policy of expediency. If there is one thing more than all others responsible for the endurance of British prestige, and the success of the imperial idea, as it has worked itself out into the

association of free, half-free and slave commonwealths, known as the British Empire, we would say it is the diplomatic shrewdness and statesmanlike sagacity of decision which enable the creators of British political and social policies to know when they are beaten, and to steer the ship of state accordingly. Though there is scarcely a country in the world where the status of labor fell so low as it did in England during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; still, when English labor (with the aid of an enlightened public opinion, the effect of a reborn sense of social and political justice, due in no small measure to the Oxford movement and the consequent Catholic revival) gradually came into its own, until in our own time those men whom it was once so fashionable to abuse and denounce in the sacred name of religion and patriotism, as deadly enemies of constitutional law and order, now sit in the front benches of the Mother of Parliaments as His Majesty's official opposition, Englishmen of all schools of political and religious opinion no longer go on blindly and ignorantly heaping senseless and shallow vituperation on the heads of labor leaders or on their movement, which is now considered so respectable, in English polite society as to merit being officially dined and wined by His Britannic Majesty, King George V, in the banquet halls of Buckingham palace.

Would that American creators of public opinion, the press, the platform and sometimes even the pulpit, would cease from prostituting themselves in trying to prolong the agony of a social and economic system, which only now in America is so blindly reactionary, as to think that it is still possible in a country once rocked in the cradle of Jeffersonian Democracy, to rivet the chains of industrial slavery on the politically free limbs of the teeming free millions of men and women who do the hard work of America. We have heard from an American minister of the Gospel, talking in an open forum in one of our large cities, on the dangers that confront the friends of constitutional liberty and private property, of the fear and horror that possessed his gentle soul at the imminence of the social and economic catastrophe, that will inevitably overtake the splendidly beautiful economic and social structure, built up so carefully, so patiently, so wisely, by the combined brains and capital of American captains of industry, on that bad day in which, as in prophetic vision, he visioned the American Federation of Labor pulling down, Samson-like, the eternal pillars of the sacred temple of American freedom and opportunity, justice, security and fair play, and burying us all alike in the dreadful tomb of this colossal, inevitable and common ruin. Our advice to such pious scaremongers, whose beautiful Christian minds are nevertheless capable of conjuring up such a calamitous doom irrevocably overtaking the progress and civilization of the twentieth century, and these United States of America, is that, becoming slowly conscious of their limitations as leaders of public opinion, they would have the good sense to retire gracefully with a cry of utter despair of the future of the world, if they like, wrapped in oblivion with the disappearance of the

only civilization that their mean and craven sycophantic souls can admire, into obscurity, and cease troubling, hampering and embarrassing another generation, whose young leaders, undaunted by the hoary specters of decay, conscious of the eternal mission of the Church and the enduring foundations of their country's real prosperity, are going forward with heads proudly erect, the heralds of divine destiny, holding out a truly democratic grasp to the horny hands of the honest toiler, as shoulder to shoulder they once before took the road of the future, and now take it again, treating with a scorn that will curl their effete souls those grave and reverend seniors who fling at their fine, noble and inspiring enthusiasm but the feeble epithet, which can accuse it of no other crime than that of merely being young, to build up a more honest, a more God-fearing and a more beautiful civilization, which was once symbolized by the cultured genius of Gothic architecture, in those sublime artistic, liturgically mystic dreams, the mediaeval cathedrals.

Kneeling afar off in their robes of stone,

and which will welcome back to Earth again its God, and whose delights, according to His word, are found in walking with the sons of honest men. The dull, ignorantly stupid, destructive, reactionary conservatism of these ossified, fossilized, and spurious relics of the *ancienne noblesse* remind us, by their blind and foolish obstinacy, of those old gnarled pagans who in spite of every sign and symptom could not be convinced otherwise but that the end of the rotten Roman civilization meant the end of the world itself. In a similar crisis of the world's history, it was only with fresh and ever-renewed outbursts of stupid fanaticism that the vanquished ancient regime met the long-provoked sentence of destiny.

The Fall of the Roman Civilization

“Accordingly, when undeniable signs announced to them the fall of that civilization, the true Romans could but desire death. Some wished to fall in a last intoxication at the banquet of civilization, crowned with roses and drunk with wine; others, wrapped in the folds of the old Roman flag, awaited the final blow with stoic despair, even as the senators of yore, seated in their curule chairs, awaited the arrival of the Gallic conqueror. All perished with their ideal, incapable of conceiving any other, witnessing the crash of Heaven and of their Gods. There are no more tragic sorrows than these because they touch humanity in those things which it loves and admires the most. All realities may fail as long as the ideal stands, if the ideal also proves false not only is the heart broken but the mind is

shattered and the intellect casts itself headlong into nothingness with a cry of utter despair". (*The Church at the Turning Points of History*, Kurth-Day, p. 51.)

Opposition to Reform

It is only natural, therefore, to find opposition to social and economic reform from certain quarters. It has been so at all times. But we are certain also that the lesson taught posterity by English economic history during the last century is the utter folly of thinking that such blind opposition is going to block ultimately, though it may retard temporarily, the onward march to final and complete victory of the forces of industrial democracy. It is therefore the part of political and social wisdom for every forward-looking American to take cognizance of and reckon with the inevitable in human affairs, as has been the traditionally justified policy of British statesmanship. But such an outlook is far removed from the present temper of American industrial policy and its devious and caitiff apologists.

It would seem that the great trouble with us Catholics is that we have too many people speaking in the name of the Church and interpreting her doctrines and traditional teaching with regard to social and economic questions, without their ever informing themselves as to what the nature of her real doctrines or traditions is. It is only a total misunderstanding of the meaning of freedom of speech and of the press that construes this most vital and essential democratic safeguard of civil liberty as a license for everybody to think and say what he wishes on any or every subject under the sun. At most, it is only a very few of the primary principles of the natural law which are so clearly self-evident that their truth is obvious without any further explanation than their mere enunciation. As soon as deductions have to be made from them, we are immediately involved in a very complex chain of reasoning that for its conclusive exactness requires long and patient thought and reading. So much is the Church alive to the evils of ignorance posing as an infallible teacher on matters of this kind, that she has specifically legislated for it, by warning Catholics against holding disputations and conferences with non-Catholics. To hold such conferences in public requires the special permission of the Holy See, or, in urgent cases, of the local Ordinary. (Canon, 1325, 3.) "This rule in our opinion also affects public disputations with Socialists, because their tenets often contain heresies. . . . When such disputations are expressly permitted, care should be taken that only capable and prudent speakers be employed to defend the Catholic side." (Augustine, *Commentary on Canon 1325*.)

The Stand of the Church

Is it any wonder then that we have intelligent labor leaders who have made a special study of matters pertaining to the social questions of the hour, telling us that they do not know exactly what to think with regard to the stand taken by the Church in her social teaching. "I have read the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII," says one gentleman, "and I have read the pastoral letter of the American Hierarchy and their Reconstruction program, I have read what Cardinals Gibbons and Manning wrote, and I know well what Dr. John A. Ryan teaches about a living wage, collective bargaining, women and children in industry, etc., but I have heard so-and-so give a talk in the open forum, or before the Knights of Columbus, and if I did not know him so well, I would say he was telling lies. I know the theoretical teaching of your Church and it is splendid, but why do nearly all of you contradict it in your patriotic speeches and practice in daily life?" It is hard to tell this sort of man that all these self-constituted Catholic apologists, for doctrines contradictory of the teaching of Leo XIII, and the American Hierarchy, and social students of the intellectual calibre of Dr. John A. Ryan, the ablest living interpreter of the moral teaching of the Catholic Church with regard to industrial ethics in America, are simply talking without the slightest authority on a subject of whose real complex problems and solution they are completely and entirely ignorant.

Injurious Apologetics

The Church suffers more from this kind of apologetics today in America perhaps than from any other source of leakage. You may say we have not the time or the leisure for the study of these important questions. Well then, the most becoming and fitting thing is the observance of a dignified silence, coupled with a humble modest docility to learn the truth if ever given the opportunity.

This is a question that Mr. Kier Hardie discusses in all its bearings in an open letter to the clergy. "The Archbishop of Canterbury, writing the other day, said he had to devote seventeen hours a day to his work and had no time left in which to solve the question mentioned. The religion which demands seventeen hours a day for organization and leaves no time for a single thought about starving and despairing men, women, and children has no message for this age." (Kier Hardie in *Labor Leader Cited in Christianity and the Working Classes*.) It was not the genius of the Catholic Church in any age.

The extremely absurd position taken up by some clergymen in the past, that the Church should have nothing at all to do with the social question, need not detain us today. No sane mind could entertain that attitude now. But what is a real menace to the prestige and progress of the Church is the opposition to and complete

misunderstanding of industrial democracy evinced by individual members of the clergy which leads the uncritical-minded masses of the toiling laity to confound this individual opposition of some churchmen here and there with the attitude of that Church which they represent in a concrete way to their flocks. "Unless the clergy shall be able and willing to understand, appreciate, and sympathetically direct the aspirations of economic democracy, it will inevitably become more and more un-Christian, and pervert all too rapidly a larger and larger proportion of our Catholic population." (Rev. John A. Ryan, D. D., *Catholic World*, Sept., 1910.) We will conclude by quoting from a speech delivered at Granada by the Bishop of Badajoz some years ago:

"As for us, what are we doing ? We remain in the sacristy just as the priests did in the eighteenth century, waiting to be summoned to confess the sick or to be called in to patch up family squabbles or to be consulted on a case of conscience: we do not see that in this present twentieth century the sick are dying wholesale without the sacraments, married couples are separating by common consent, and that cases are solved not by reference to conscience but to convenience. Our duty is precisely to come out of our sacristies and churches and cathedrals and monasteries without losing the spirit of God and without neglecting to invoke the assistance of Heaven. We must ascertain the actual condition of society, study its necessities and labor unceasingly, not only with the poor, but with the rich, in Christianizing everybody and everything, in 're-establishing all things in Christ,' according to the motto of Pius X, learning modern tactics and employing the same weapons as our adversaries. Leo XIII commands us to 'go to the people,' and praises a loving solicitude for the people, saying that it befits the clergy, both secular and regular. Pius X repeats and confirms these directions. It is of urgent importance then, that the clergy who emphatically ought to be the soul of every enterprise accomplished in the name of Christ and His Church, should undertake a vigorous campaign of Catholic social action." The Bishop of Madrid on the same occasion spoke as follows:

"The priests must go to the people and strive to introduce economic and social reforms among them, they must shirk no sacrifices in the matter." The Italian bishops have addressed their clergy in the same strain. "To ask," they said, "whether the priest can occupy himself with all that concerns the very life of society, and especially of the bulk of the people of this Christian democracy, is to ask whether the priest ought to be a priest." Compare this, which is the real attitude of the Catholic Church towards social reform, everything said and done no matter by whom to the contrary notwithstanding, with the attitude of the Anglican clergy of the beginning of the nineteenth century. "Generally astonishingly ignorant, even in theological matters he was full of narrow dogmatism, and the enemy of all spiritual and ecclesiastical progress in consequence of his time-serving dependence

on the richer classes: for he shared all their prejudices against the aspiration of the lower classes.” (*Social Catholicism in England*, Dr. K. Waninger, p. 39.)

If this attitude of the Church towards social reform, as expressed by popes, cardinals, bishops and priests, who have made a life study of her moral teaching as Dr. John A. Ryan, were the dominant attitude of our creators of public opinion, the press, the political platform, and the pulpits of our churches, how many votes do you think the Socialist party would poll in 1928? What foundation would there be in the minds of the American people which would justify that pious catastrophic prophecy referred to above?

Article XLIX

The Attitude of the Modern Mind Towards Social Reform

In the last two articles we have used some heavy artillery to clear away some obstructions that blocked our advance, and made untenable a few apparently impregnable positions held by the enemies of industrial and social reform. We enlisted as invincible allies, whose authority cannot be well challenged without necessarily exposing oneself to the charge of rash and ethically temerarious foolhardiness, the great names of Leo XIII, Pius X and XI, and Benedict XV. We adduced the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Europe and America, and the pioneers of social and industrial reform in their respective countries, von Ketteler, Manning and Dr. John A. Ryan, head of the Department of Social Action of the Catholic Welfare Conference. The labors of the latter, in the field of industrial and social ethics, will inspire the future historian of the Church of the twentieth century, in recording the great lustre shed by such an illustrious son on his alma mater, to salute the classic shades of the St. Paul seminary then remembered in benediction as the Cluny of American social reform.

We shall now go on to chronicle the slow progress made from the first beginnings of social reform in the nineteenth century. As we have proved already, “the Reformation was the dividing line between an organic and a critical period, but the critical has threatened to destroy what remains of an organic Europe. The Reformation was a violent revolt of individualism tending towards Bolshevism of thought, but in England it took form as the great slump, when the nation, wearied and decimated by civil wars and worried by new thought, was unable to meet the Renaissance from the Catholic plane and sagged into the second-rate and compromise.

“In the English Church a sham prelacy and a Bowdlerized mass were symbolic of the moral exhaustion, rather than reform, that the nation suffered under Tudorism. But in every walk of life or art there were signs that a great tradition had been snapped. The degeneration that set into heraldry and brass tomb-slabs was a

minor item, but the debasement of currency was not. Architecture failed singularly. Literature enjoyed a miraculous recovery, thanks to the Janus, Shakespeare, who carried the old Catholic tradition into the new era. In economics the English people exchanged the monastery for the poor-house, the village cross for the stocks, and hierarchy for the squirarchy. Eventually the Reformation bred Socialism out of the dead guilds.” (Shane Leslie in *The Dublin Review*, December, 1923, p. 305.)

Origin of Socialism

Thus does the versatile editor of *The Dublin Review* account for the origin of Socialism. It is where every scholar has found it. In reviewing Dr. George O’Brien’s essay on the *Economic Effects of the Reformation*, a book that will enhance the author’s reputation as a sure and learned Catholic economist, he tells us that Dr. O’Brien hails the golden mean of mediaeval ethics, between the extravagant evils of capitalism and socialism, both of which he traces to the Reformation. And he adds at the end of his brilliant review: “The Anglican oligarchy, who ruled England for three hundred years, he seems to overlook as a compromise, but its bewildered agony in these days is none the less a part of the great movement he has set himself to study.”

Yes, indeed, the cracking shell of capitalistic industrialism has carried within itself the germs of dissolution for a hundred years. Its rosy complexion at its best was but the hectic flush that indicates the ravages of an early decline and death. Towards the end of the eighteenth century even the regime established by the Reformation in England began to show signs of a breakdown.

The Pursuit of Wealth

“The pursuit of wealth, which had been the vitalizing principle of the period, was bringing in its train all manner of economic and political complications. It had resulted in the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few. Class divisions and class hatred were increasing. Money made in trade was employed in land speculation. Rents were raised and wages reduced. After the Napoleonic wars there came economic stagnation and widespread unemployment. Government had fallen into the hands of an oligarchy who wielded all political power. Spiritually, society was dead. Religion had reached the lowest ebb. Architecture had become a lifeless form. The crafts, from being media of esthetic expression, had degenerated into affairs of trade and commerce; some slight tradition of art lingered in painting, which henceforth monopolized the name of art. Political science as a theory of the social organism had entirely disappeared, and its place had been taken by a new political economy which revived the laws of the jungle. Nothing now remained of

the old mediaeval order but its human tradition which survived among the poor. Mankind was left.

Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
The other powerless to be born.

The nineteenth century is the story of the wandering.” (Arthur Pentty, *Art, Parliamentarianism and the Nineteenth Century*.)

The Problems of Reform

To reform anything one has first to change the outlook of those that control it. This is equally true of individuals, institutions of all descriptions, municipal and national groups, society itself. If the leaders of any age are lacking in vision, if they are of that stupidly self-satisfied kind that believe with dogmatic obstinacy that nothing can be changed without changing it for the worse, then of course the way of the reformer is a hard one. “It was never done this way before” (which in the mouth of the reactionary means as far as he can see, which is just exactly to the tip of his nose) is considered a good reason enough for remaining in the old bad rut.

There is another characteristic of this sort of mentality, which is that the present way of doing things is so perfect that improvement is intrinsically impossible. Dr. Ralph Adams Cram has written a book about this hopeless lack of leadership in our day. It is entitled *The Nemesis of Mediocrity*. It is a very thought-provoking book. Deploring this lack of leadership, he writes:

Leadership

“Meanwhile the hungry sheep look up, and are not fed; for the soul of sane man demands leadership, and in spite of academic aphorisms on equality, a dim consciousness survives of the fundamental truth that without strong leadership democracy is a menace; without strong leadership, culture and even civilization will pass away.” Nowhere does he see or hear the call for men to rise up and follow along the lines revealed by clear vision and under the dynamic force of personal leadership. “Halting and hesitant, bewildered by opportunism and expediency, dumb before a crisis beyond their powers to meet, the shepherds and pastors of flocks already more than decimated, shake in their indecision, put the great issue to one side, and while they wait helplessly for a time more in scale with their abilities, turn to the old round of theological argument and disciplinary bickerings, leaving the fate of their sheep to be determined after a fashion they cannot control, and the humbler clergy busy themselves with parochial routine. . . .

The Church still carries *in petto* all that was ever her possession, including infinite possibilities of beneficent action and influence; at present, however, this is inoperative, and with the rest of the world she stands hesitant and diffident, rejected by the majority of men, ignored by states and denied even the form of leadership.” That is the result of the attitude of mind described above.

Modern Mental Outlook

It seems to us that this is all very true and very significant. We think it is due to our modern mental outlook. Why should we change? Are we not perfect already? Have we not very good reasons for thinking that ourselves and our culture and our civilization are the greatest and the best – the last link in the long chain of evolutionary progress now going on, not indeed since Mother Eve plucked the apple off the first tree of knowledge, but since our revered ancestor, the Pithecanthropus, fell off the last tree of ignorance.

We suppose even Dean Inge would not dare to be so unscientific as to deny that, after all, there cannot be such a great chasm separating Nordics from Alpine and Mediterranean basin races, since we are all so enlightened nowadays as to know what our benighted ancestors would not care so much to brag about, namely, that our common father was by no means a Valentine! Science is silent about the birthplace of this aboriginal democrat. What joy it would have brought to the old gentleman’s heart, however, if he could have known what a precious cargo of his posterity came over in the Mayflower, even though later they were to forget and despise their ancient and venerable common parentage so much, as to pride themselves on their exclusive and aristocratic genealogical stock.

Isn’t it really amusing to sit back and watch the whole show of modern American life with all its crazy inconsistencies? “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” says one native-born, white, dry and Protestant one hundred per cent American, and then jumps off the platform to lynch a negro because he is colored! “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” says another, asking his constituents to go forward with the Bible in one hand and the constitution in the other, as soon as they wash off the tar and feathers used in decorating some Hebrew just chased out of town because he believes in monotheism!

Private and Public School

Over here again is a third, who honestly thinks the private school is un-American, because the good sisters wearing a religious garb who teach there are so

superstitious as to believe that our first parents were decent human beings, made after the image and likeness of Almighty God, because they had immortal souls, while the little bob-haired flapper educator of the little red country schoolhouse is so scientific after one summer school course in the State University, as to teach her little flock of budding citizen sheiks that our first parent was a soulless hairy ape, whose gracious consort was no social butterfly either, we presume, because the professor of typewriting and simplified spelling said this theory was as yet an undemonstrated guess, which no reputable scientist holds at the present day! We could develop this vein indefinitely if we had the leisure of being the principal speaker at an afternoon tea. But there is one thing more we will say, and it is this, that verily our fellow citizens of both sexes do not at all seem overburdened with a saving sense of humor. They take themselves altogether too seriously.

No wonder that the work of social and industrial reform is a slow process. This kind of public opinion must first be educated and hardened from this present state of intellectual fluidity, “which is really not so much a definite conviction or emotion as a rotting or a deliquescence, a melting and confounding of the outlines of beliefs and desires, a going to slush of all values, a thawing and liquefaction of all that was hard and permanent in the world. The whole of modernism is an attempt to obliterate distinctions – to discover similarity and unity everywhere. All men are equal, men are the same as women, good is the same as evil, freewill does not exist, catastrophe has no place in the universe, and everything is gradually evolved.” (E. Cowley, in *The New Age*, November 13, 1913.)

Hopeless Attitude

This attitude of mind is hopeless in dealing with serious things like the co-operative ownership idea, collective bargaining, the abolition of child labor, and all the other fine, and good, and Catholic and mediaeval things that industrial democracy stands for. It is an attitude of mind that is nearly dead in England. Men like Belloc and Chesterton have made a joke of it for over a quarter of a century. Ironic sarcasm is the only weapon that makes any impression at all on the density of this almost universal disease known as the modern way of looking at things. Where is the use, for example, in arguing seriously with a lady who graduates from a university and never heard of Homer, and the one that is determined sometime to spend a week in Chicago, because she loves art!

This is the kind of mind in the mass that obstructs all reform. It is the sort of mentality that says, “you cannot put back the hands of the clock.” It is the kind of mind that thinks everything new is in some mysterious way superior to everything that is old, except seniority. Machinery has exercised some evil power and influence over the modern mind akin to that of magic. How can you otherwise

account for its confessed helplessness in front of such a frail automaton as the hands on the dial of a clock? The modern Catholic mind might be all right, but its contacts are vitiating its capacity to think for itself also. Therefore do we see no appreciable difference between the modern Catholic and the modern secular attitude towards the great problems of the day. This is especially true with regard to the social question. "For so many generations had the descendants of the men who stole the Church lands drilled into the minds of the people the idea that the Middle Ages was a period of black tyranny, ignorance, superstition and poverty, that a prejudice had been created which was fatal to all clear thinking on social questions, and credence was given to the idea, enunciated by Adam Smith, that poverty was due to lack of productive power instead of to gross social and economic injustice, as was actually the case. It was thus that during the nineteenth century faith in the benevolence of machinery became the faith of the people. Its sufficiency was exalted into a dogma above and beyond discussion (*e. g.*, the hands of the clock). A man might question God, but not the machine – to do so was heresy in the nineteenth century." (Penty, *A Guildsman's Interpretation of History*, pp. 247-248.)

We have known men who thought the theologians of the Middle Ages very uncritical for referring to Aristotle as "the master." The same men will very gravely close a discussion on the causes of the war by quoting what they heard a business man say on the street car! Is not that attitude typical of that vexing, annoying, baffling, mirth-provoking phenomenon – the modern mind?

Article L

The Mediocrist and the Mediaevalist Points of View

We are very interested in a point of view. The reactionary and the progressive, the conservative and the liberal mind are mainly distinguished by their points of view. A man's life work is almost entirely determined by the way he looks at things. The piously, respectably stupid individual who we in America canonize as the typically safe and sane, law and order, front porch, best mind sort of citizen, is exactly the counterpart of the nineteenth century Englishman which every standardized novelist would describe as being hopelessly mid-Victorian. We would define a mid-Victorian as one who was half a century alive when Queen Victoria celebrated her golden jubilee as sovereign of the British empire, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, supreme head of the Anglican Church and defender of the Faith. He was one, therefore, who lived while Victoria was reigning for fifty years and who thought she would go on reigning forever. Now the important thing to our mind about the mid-Victorian is not the fact that he was an Englishman, or that he was half a century old, or that his life coincided with

Queen Victoria's first fifty years as Queen of Ireland and supreme head of the Church, but the fact that he had a viewpoint, which was that he thought Queen Victoria would go on reigning forever.

The stupidly standardized, smugly correct citizen who could celebrate the golden jubilee of his nativity in, say, 1900 A. D. has lived a life whose limits are conterminous with the golden age of capitalistic industrialism. The important thing about this fellow citizen again is not the fact of his longevity, because very few pride themselves on becoming heirs to all the physical and mental infirmities of senility, nor the fact that he knew of no other economic order but the contemporaneously existing capitalistic industrial one, which everybody that he knew just took for granted with all its works and pomps, but the beautiful unquestioning faith which gave him his most cherished conviction, his entrenched viewpoint, the fact that he has the untroubled faculty of thinking that the now-decaying social system of capitalistic industrialism should go on existing for ever.

The only heretic in his eyes is the unregenerate mediaevalist who, mindful of critically accepted historical facts, believes that capitalistic industrialism is merely as old as Alexandrina Victoria, and will soon be as dead as the gracious queen, immortalized only by Lytton Strachey, and the damning adjective Victorian, which has changed a name into a thing, associated in every mind for a quarter of a century with bourgeois prosperity, with militant moralism, with middle class virtue, with narrow puritanism, with provincial dogmatism, with literary sentimentalism. We would like to write as its epitaph what an Irishman might write for Queen Victoria's tomb: "Here lies the ugliest thing that ever died."

Modern American Characteristic

It is a very pronounced characteristic of the modern American standpoint towards ideas and theories that make for social and industrial reform, to fear big ideals and men who can be so brave as to ask their fellow citizens to aim at realizing these ideals as far as practicable. Our watch words betray our love for mediocrity. In other times and other places the crusader spirit would rule supreme. *Ad astra* was blazoned on their standards. *March on* is the dominant note in the national anthem of liberty. It is strange that America should look around and away from progress for the gospel of safety and sanity in the cry, "back to normalcy." "He cannot be president of the United States," says a great political leader. "He is not mediocre enough in his mental and political achievements." And this in the twentieth century, and in these, the United States of America!

Even the Old Testament rebukes us for our weakness and pusillanimity: "Let us now praise men of renown, and our fathers in their generation. The Lord hath wrought great glory through His magnificence from the beginning. Such as have

borne rule in their dominions, men of great power, and endued with their wisdom, shewing forth in the prophets the dignity of prophets. . . . All these have gained glory in their generations and were praised in their days. They that were born of them have left a name behind them, that their praises might be related.” And the same inspired page gives us a picture also of safe and sane mediocre normalcy: “And there are some, of whom there is no memorial: who are perished, as if they had never been; and are become as if they had never been born, and their children with them.” For the great leaders of men, the holy writer goes on to ask: “Let the people show forth their wisdom, and the Church declare their praise.” (Ecclesiasticus XLIV.) And when this mediocrity died which Ecclesiasticus despised, Dante, the foremost man of all the world, thought their disembodied souls too mean to damn them even in a decent Hell.

Here sighs, with lamentations and loud moans,
 Resounded through the air pierced by no star,
 That e'en I wept at entering. Various tongues,
 Horrible languages, outcries of woe,
 Accents of anger, voices deep and hoarse,
 With hands together smote that swelled the sounds,
 Made up a tumult, that forever whirls
 Bound through that air with solid darkness stained,
 Like to the sand that in the whirlwind flies.

I then, with error yet encompast, cried:
 “O master! what is this I hear? what race
 Are these, who seem so overcome with woe?”

He thus to me: “This miserable fate
 Suffer the wretched souls of those, who lived
 Without praise or blame, with that ill band
 Of angels mixed, who nor rebellious proved
 Nor yet were true to God, but for themselves
 Were only. From his bounds Heaven drove them forth,
 Not to impair his lustre; nor the depth
 Of Hell receives them, lest the accursed tribe
 Should glory thence with exultation vain.”

I then: “Master! what doth aggrieve them thus,
 That they lament so loud?” He straight replied:
 “That will I tell thee briefly. These of death
 No hope may entertain: and their blind life
 So meanly passes, that all other lots
 They envy. Fame of them the world hath none

Nor suffers; mercy and justice scorn them both.
 Speak not of them, but look, and pass them by.”

(*The Divine Comedy*, Canto III.)

That is what mediaevalism thought of mediocrity in the thirteenth century in the great poem which critics describe as the “*Summa Theologica*” in verse. That is what mediaevalists think of it now. It remained indeed for progressive and democratic America to exalt it to the heavens in the twentieth century in its canonized battle cries of “safe and sane,” and “back to normalcy.”

Democracy Without Supreme Leadership

“Mene, Tekel, Upharsin” is on the wall in words of fire and blood, and the Belshazzars of modernism can neither understand them, nor, which is worse, find their interpreter, therefore they and we go on to our predestined fate. Democracy, without the supreme leadership of men who by nature or divine direction can speak and act with and by authority, is a greater menace than autocracy. Men and nations have been what they have been, either for good or evil, not by the will of a numerical majority but by the supreme leadership of the few – seers, prophets, captains of men; and so it always will be. When, as now, the greatest crisis in fifteen centuries overpasses the world, and society sinks under the nemesis of universal mediocrity, then we realize that the system has doomed itself, since, impotent to produce leaders, it has signed its own death warrant.” (*The Nemesis of Mediocrity*, Cram, p. 46.)

That is the reason we said in the beginning of this article that we are so mightily interested in a point of view. The modern mind is essentially a mediocre mind. It glories in the mediocre point of view. It loves to take appearances for reality. The great thing is to be seen of men. It has lived all its life in a world of illusions vainly imagining it was at work laying the foundations of a new social order, whereas in reality it was doing nothing more or less than assisting to remove the last barrier that stood between the industrial civilization which it adored and its final catastrophe.

“Meanwhile people who had preserved their mental balance found themselves at a disadvantage. To them the fallacies of the new gospel were manifest. They found it easy to expose them, but impossible to base any practical activity upon the truth as they understood it. The reason for this was to be found in the fact that since the decline of religion and art the links between them and the popular mind had been broken. They were no longer understood. Hence it came about that throughout the nineteenth century efforts were made by means of experiments and historical research to find lost roads and to recover lost truths. Efforts were made to revive

religion, art and social science. This is the secret of the great intellectual and scholastic activity of the nineteenth century. Its aim was to enable men to regain that grip on reality which they had lost. To talk about the nineteenth century as being an age of enlightenment is nonsense. It was perhaps the darkest period in history, when the great traditions were dead; when great men groped for the light and ordinary men were saved from despair by the hypnotism of the machine.” (*A Guildsman’s Interpretation of History*, Penty, pp. 249-250.)

The Great Struggle of the Twentieth Century

We will write it down here, not as a prophecy because it is now a plain fact, that the great struggle of the twentieth century will be fought between mediaeval and modern ideas. In other words, between Catholic Christianity and secularism. The danger that confronts the world in our times is exactly the same as that which confronted France on the eve of the revolution. There is going on in the world around us a popular and unconscious movement back to mediaevalism which is being opposed and frustrated by so-called intellectuals whose eyes are held and are trying to force the world to walk in an opposite direction. The instinctive impulses of the people are sound and right and good. Those of the intellectuals are unsound and wrong and bad. We base our surmise on facts. We will illustrate how the instinctive actions of the average man are headed in the direction of mediaevalism.

There is the arrival of the trade union movement which Chesterton described as a return to the past by men who are ignorant of the past. The tragedy of the situation is, to our mind, the fact that those who should be the natural leaders in this movement are opposing it with all their might, thus placing perhaps an insurmountable barrier between the workers and their rightful leaders. Again, take the movement among the farmers and workers for a fixed price. There is a moral issue of paramount importance at stake here. It is an attempt to get back to the most significant economic fact of the Middle Ages, the just price. People will never accept a fixed price that is not also a just price. The first movement has to do with the interests of the producers and the second with those of the consumers. The link connecting both is the co-operative movement which at one stroke makes guildsmen out of trade-unionists, makes a capitalist out of the wage earner, and ends industrial-warfare entirely by the annihilation of one of the parties to the conflict.

Society is very near the communal relationships, therefore, which obtained in the Middle Ages when these relationships were sustained by the teaching of Christianity. When society has progressed thus far there is every possibility of a return to Christianity. The Church in her official teaching has proclaimed the principles that would restore this communal spirit of Christendom. If the forces

opposing the mediaeval idea are successful, we will first arrive at the Servile State and then revolution, anarchy, and a dark age.

Two Types of Society

“For after all there are only two types of society that have existed since currency was introduced – the capitalist civilizations of Greece and Rome and of modern Europe and America that did not control currency, and the communal societies of mediaeval Europe and Asia that did. There is, finally, no third type of society, inasmuch as all societies conform to one or other of these types, differing only to the extent that in different societies emphasis is given to different aspects of them. Hence it is reasonable to suppose that as the capitalist civilization of Rome was followed by the communal civilization of mediaevalism, the reaction against capitalism today will carry us along to a future where the promise of the Middle Ages will be fulfilled” (*The Path to the Guilds*, Penty). As Father Husslein, S. J., states it very tersely, it will not be an age for Morgans, Rockefellers and Garys, as can be plainly seen, but it will be a tolerable age for the plain man to live in, and a good age for the worker to serve his God with a loyal faith and a joyous heart. Every stroke of the chisel could then be creative work.

Returning Ideals

“And yet can these times return again? Literally, no; but in their ideals, yes! Much water has run under many mills since then, but the same faith still exists which the guildsmen knew and practiced. In the spirit of that faith our social systems could without doubt be renovated today, and peace and contentment be restored to Earth. But we know, too, that this faith cannot now be made universally operative in a largely non-Catholic society, much as the best thinkers of the modern world are steadily returning to its ideals by countless different routes” (Husslein, S. J., “Mediaeval and Modern Economics,” *Homiletic Review*, November, 1923).

A prominent labor leader approaches the point raised by the Jesuit. “The question may reasonably be asked whether the policy we advocate does not imply a return to Christianity; must not reformers return to the Churches? The answer is that this would be the case if the Churches taught Christianity as it was understood by the early Christians. But such is not the case.”

We believe ourselves that if the unconscious mediaeval movements in the world about us got enlightened leadership instead of blind and stupid opposition, Christendom would be at our doors. It makes all the difference in the world, then, whether our viewpoint is progressive, Christian and Catholic, or reactionary,

modernist and secular – in a word, whether you look at things from the standpoint of a mediocrist or a mediaevalist.

Article LI

Our Minds Must Go Along with the Mind of the Church in Its Attitude Towards Social Reform

We pointed out in the foregoing article that the Church in America today was faced with a peculiar danger. It is this, what whereas in England and Germany and in European countries generally. Catholic leaders of thought have long ago grasped the fact that the main current underlying social and industrial unrest was and is a suppressed Catholicism struggling for freedom of action and expression in the social and industrial life of the world, in America outside the official teaching of the hierarchy and a very few individuals, this same current is thought to be antagonistic to Catholicism, and gets no sympathy from Catholic sources, but on the contrary a great deal of ignorant criticism and blind opposition.

The peculiar danger facing the Church, therefore, is this, that while the movement for industrial and social reform is advancing along traditionally Catholic lines to the final goal of an ideal industrial democracy, and advancing along these lines almost unconsciously, but with an instinctive accuracy in evaluating correct ethical and moral standards, that were once the peculiar boast and possession of Catholic teaching, still the whole movement and its leaders may become alienated from the leadership, that they again with instinctive correctness, expect from the Catholic Church, and from those especially who ought be best fitted, because of their official capacity, to speak and act in her name.

Only a liberal education and a scholarly understanding of the traditional moral teaching of the Catholic Church will save us from this bad and unfortunate consummation, certainly not devoutly to be wished. The good intentioned and pious, but ignorant and reactionary policy, which St. Teresa anathematized even in the spiritual direction of her community, is fated to have like disastrous consequences for the Catholic cause, if men are allowed to condemn the suppressed Catholicism of the social and industrial reform movements of America and to do it as the official teachers of a Church of whose traditional social and industrial doctrines their utterance betray a complete misunderstanding, and a culpably invincible ignorance.

Splendid Opportunity to Leaders

On the other hand, what a splendid opportunity is offered today in America to intelligent-minded leaders of Catholic thought and action in our social and

industrial world. If the good, honest rank and file of the American people could be made acquainted with our social and industrial platform, as given us by our Popes and our Bishops in accordance with our ancient historical traditional genius, how far from their minds would be put the thought, that no matter what may be these official professions of faith in her moral code, we are ever ready at the smallest beck of expediency to betray these fine protestations of high moral principle, and our hearts, if not our heads, wish the Church to play the role that those who do not know her real soul are so ready to assign to her, *viz.*, “the moral policeman of capitalism.”

Is there not often only too much ground given for convincing the enemies of the Church of the truth of this charge? What right or foundation in historic fact has any spokesman for the Catholic name for saying, *e. g.*, that “the most disgraceful and shameful period of the Church’s history was that from the tenth to the sixteenth century,” or that “Leo XIII did not mean what he wrote in the Encyclical on the ‘Condition of Labor,’” or that “the reconstruction program of the American hierarchy was merely a cunning political gesture,” in response to the current popular demand for more humane conditions of life for the men who were returning victorious from foreign battlefields, where they had risked their lives in order to make the world safe forever for the fortunes of political democracy, which as they were led to believe was the great object of that stupendous struggle, and unparalleled slaughter of human beings? It was this sort of intellectually decrepit drivel that prompted the following scathing excoriation from the pen of the learned Benedictine Bishop, Dr. John Cuthbert Hedley of Newport, who with Cardinal Manning of Westminster, and Archbishop Walsh of Dublin, gave us the official English translation of Leo’s great encyclical, the *Rerum Novarum*:

“But if he can only simper, utter crude negatives or launch juvenile exaggerations and commonplace abuse, he is dishonoring the profession in which he is bound to be an expert. We read and read every day, and many hours a day. Yet accuracy is not a mark of the ecclesiastical mind. Can it be that we lack, in our holy vocation, that earnest purpose, that stern determination, which so generally distinguish those who are endeavouring to make their way in the world? Whatever the cause, it is a very damaging defect. The men of science – the Huxleys, the Tyndalls, the Spencers – reproach us with it. Even our cousins who have studied in medical, legal or technical schools, detect it in our conversation, and remain convinced that ecclesiasticism is childish trifling and has little relation with real knowledge.” (*Lex Levitarum*, Hedley, pp. 147-148.)

This mean and cringing attitude of soul, like the ugly things to which it parasitically clings, or cravenly fears in its moral indecision, is itself a result of Reformation poison instilled into the intellectual atmosphere which we daily

breathe, because it is only too true, alas, that the Reformation has left its mark on our modern Catholicism as well as on Protestantism.

Deadly Blow at Authority

“The Reformation, therefore, coloured not only those who accepted it, but also those who rejected it. If it had not been for the deadly blow directed at its authority in the sixteenth century, the Catholic Church would have been able to change the whole colour of modern European civilization. If the ethical teaching of the scholastics had been allowed to develop freely and peacefully, there can be no doubt that it would have evolved side by side with the new developments of modern life, and would have proved perfectly adequate to meet all the necessities of the complex civilization of the present time; and, if the great charitable institutions of the Middle Ages had been suffered to pursue their course, it is equally certain that a great part of the terrible social problems of the industrial era would have been either mollified or avoided. Above all, the modern world, instead of being a battleground, studded with the hostile camps of capitalism and socialism, and every other economic theory, would have been a harmonious society, in which all the members would be bound by identical ties of right and duty, in which the conflicting claims of the individual and the community would be regulated by well-understood principles of justice, universally recognized and universally enforced.” (*Economic Effects of the Reformation*, p. 175.)

This is exactly what our present Catholic platform of social action is attempting to do again after a long silence of four hundred years. We are courageous in the faith that Christendom will have a second spring. There are many obstacles to the realization of our ideals. We are living in a world that accepts only the civil state as the sole power authorized to prescribe and enforce the moral standards of social and economic life. Even the Catholic capitalist is impatient with the ethical creed of his Church, unless its mind goes along with his own preconceived notions and prejudices as to the right and wrong of all the means of accumulating wealth.

Need of a Universal Social Ethic

We have no cosmopolitan or common standard for regulating trade and commerce between civilized nations. Here is where we most need the universal social ethic of the Middle Ages which was the common role for Christendom, and took no notice of national frontiers. If such a standard was necessary in mediaeval times, it is a thousand times more urgent today than then because of the growth of trade and commerce between modern nations, and the increased complexity of modern international relations. It is, humanly speaking, impossible to attempt to

reconstruct a Christian social order animated by a higher social ethic in any one country, as long as its competing neighbors are free to conduct their own economic and industrial life along the old unregulated lines of the lawlessness of jungle morality.

The pioneer of a new social order would be economically destroyed. And yet it is the one despairing cry of a dying civilization to set up some international thing, league, or court, or council, which would ameliorate the social conditions of a world, that is at last waking up to the fact that some universal power is needed to save it from utter destruction and ruin. It does not yet perceive that it is the dictates of a conscience and not of any convention that can alone affect the conduct of individuals or nations. As long as the civilized world goes on despising the Divinely appointed universal teacher and guardian of the moral law, as long as it sets up the state as the only competent power to enforce moral standards in social life, as long as the Church continues to be ignored and despised, so long will the regeneration of the social life of mankind be impossible of attainment.

What utter folly then to tell the social and industrial world that the Church has no contribution to make towards the amelioration of those conditions which are crying out on every side for remedy and reform. Is it not a plain flat contradiction of her very purpose in the world? And still the advocates of this ostrich-like policy of isolation on the part of the Church from all the problems that are vexing the minds and souls of men and women everywhere pride themselves on this negative attitude, as if the Lord of the vineyard had not already condemned the man who defended his culpable inactivity with the sordid, selfish question, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Only Institution Capable

"There is one institution and one institution alone which is capable of supplying and enforcing the social ethic that is needed to revivify the world. It is an institution at once intranational and international; an institution that can claim to pronounce infallibly on moral matters, and to enforce the observance of its moral decrees by direct sanctions on the individual conscience of man; an institution which, while respecting and supporting the civil governments of nations, can claim to exist independently of them, and can insist that they shall not intrude upon the moral life or fetter the moral liberty of their citizens. Europe possessed such an institution in the Middle Ages; its dethronement was the unique achievement of the Reformation; and the injury inflicted by that dethronement has never since been repaired." (*Economic Effects of the Reformation*, pp. 179-180.)

It is a very sad thing to see the Church in any country throw away its hold on the minds and hearts of the common people. It only requires some unusual crisis, some

extraordinary testing sometimes, to make evident this total lack of confidence in ecclesiastical leadership. Some of the papers read recently at the annual conference of the Catholic Truth Society of Ireland, under the presidency of His Eminence Cardinal Logue and before a large attendance of the Irish hierarchy, make very sad reading for those who can yet remember the time when the Irish priest's word was sacred law for his obedient and respectful people.

Professor O'Rahilly, of the National University of Ireland, lecturing on "The Catholic Laymen in the Labour Movement," took throughout a very pessimistic view as to the influence of the Church in Ireland in matters affecting the interests of labor. The workers, he said, had a real battle to fight, and if they got neither co-operation nor sympathy from the Church, then they would work out the problems in their own way, and that influence which the Church might have had would be seized by another organization, and invariably in the course of human things would be mixed up with baser ends. If religion treated men as disembodied spirits, it would evaporate altogether.

The real, vital fact in their own country at present was the series of strikes. What was the connection of the Catholic religion in that case? It was treated as irrelevant by both sides to the strike, and even in smaller areas defied. What struck him was the helplessness of the Catholic religion in face of a tremendous economic upheaval like the present one.

After insisting on the right to a living wage for honest work, and pointing to the better conditions prevailing in the Middle Ages, Professor O'Rahilly turned for a concrete illustration of the present-day position, to the Irish dock dispute. " 'Was the cross-channel wage,' he asked, 'a living wage for Irish Catholic workmen? Had there been any attempt to lower the other costs of production before attempting to lower the labour?' This was a test case for them, and he believed that they could learn a very good lesson from their failure to have any influence whatever on this extraordinary economic situation in which they were involved. There was no Catholic public opinion brought to bear on the question. There was none available. They had no remedy to propose. They had no influence on either side. They must confess that Catholicism had no social influence or program in this country if they were to abide by the test case of the present strikes. Even if they had a coherent idea, they had no means of making it effective." (*The Tablet*, Oct. 27th 1923.)

Conditions in Ireland

And yet this condition of things in the Irish Church has not come about over night. How different would things be if for the past six or seven years a Mannix or a Manning had been guiding the destinies of the Church, and shaping the policies of a country, which is fast drifting into one of the most anti-clerical in Europe,

remaining at the same time the most intensely Catholic. A little mediaevalism also, as Professor O’Rahilly points out, might give a better flavor to Irish economic teaching. All of us may learn a lesson from these happenings, and change our point of view before our bourbonism invites a like contempt for our moral doctrines, because “whilst a certain amount of negative criticism of Socialism and other theories cannot be dispensed with, most of our attention must be given to the expounding of positive doctrine. Working men are much more likely to be impressed by knowing what the Church advocates than by knowing what she condemns. They will grasp all this the more readily and thoroughly if it is placed in its historic setting, if they learn something of what the Church has done in the past for society in general and the working class in particular.” (H. Somerville, Jan., 1913, *London Month.*)

Article LII

Religion Must Be Made to Permeate the Political, Social and Industrial Life of the Nation as Leo Says It Did in the Great Middle Age

We spoke in the foregoing article of the obligation that is incumbent on all Catholics of thinking in harmony with the mind of the Church on great outstanding questions of the day. We emphasized this point especially for those who take it upon themselves from time to time to speak in the name of the Church either explicitly or implicitly. It would be shocking, of course, to think that anyone professing the Catholic religion would presume to contradict consciously the explicit teaching of the Catholic Church. It would be just as shocking to betray by compromise, for a little popularity, the express stand the Church has taken already towards the great problems of the day in the field of industrial and social ethics.

To avoid this dire calamity of unconscious contradiction of the explicit teaching of the Church as it affects the economic dealings of society, we recommend that a prudent silence be observed by those who are in ignorance of the Church teaching on these matters. In this we were only repeating the promulgated law of the Church as enunciated in Canon 1325 of the Code of Canon Law, which states that no one who was not by training and education competent, after due permission from the Holy See or in cases of necessity the local ordinary, should be allowed to speak in public in the name of the Church on such problems as Socialism, or carry on controversies on kindred questions with non-Catholics. The reason behind this law, of course, was and is that the Church cannot afford to be placed in a false position or her teaching presented in a false light.

The People and the World of Labor

On the other hand, we stated that though in the past it would be possible to make any kind of a statement on these great questions that continue to vex society, and probably appear to know what one was talking about, that is no longer a possibility. People generally, and the labor world particularly, not only know what they want themselves but they know also fairly accurately what the teaching Church has to say about the ethics and morality of what they want, and the means they intend to employ in order to get what they are after.

Since the day when Adam Smith expressed scientifically the Reformation attitude towards industrial and social ethics, and his great work, *The Wealth of Nations*, became the bible of the policy of *Laissez Faire*, there have been Catholics in various walks of life who have accepted that policy as something Catholic and divine. The teaching of Manchesterism is even to this day here and there so solemnly enunciated and with such tridentine finality by spokesmen of the Catholic Church that one wonders how their minds can have escaped all the literature that has been printed, and all the official teaching decreed by the Holy Roman Catholic Church since Leo XIII issued his great encyclical on the conditions of the working classes in 1891.

The Manchester school declared categorically that neither the Church nor the state, religion or politics, civil or moral or divine law, had anything to do with wealth as an economic factor. Wealth and poverty were the effects of economic laws as little affected by man's freedom as the fall of the Newtonian apple. Christian doctrine had its own sphere mapped out for it by Manchesterists and as soon as it encroached on the sacred freedom of a man's business, big or small, they cried out. Thus far shalt thou go but no farther. Back to the sacristy was their advice to the clergy of any denomination who would dare to say to them: Thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, thou shalt not rob the widow and the orphan, because forsooth it might bring the far cry of the Apostle to their ears and touch their stony reformed and truly evangelical hearts, as it is written: "Behold the hire of the laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which by fraud has been kept back by you, crieth: and the cry of them hath entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth."

And this is no wild radical communistic utterance of some farm-labor candidate for congress or senate, but the teaching of the Catholic Epistle of St. James, written in the fourth verse of the fifth chapter and called Catholic or Universal because it was not written to any particular people or particular person, but to the faithful in general and for all time. The wisdom of the Apostle in preaching such a doctrine will be questioned, of course, by those wise and prudent men who know that he was martyred a short time after, about twenty-eight years after our Lord's

ascension. He might have spent a long respectable and perfectly peaceful life repeating harmless, dull, insipid, pale, parochial platitudes about wealth and poverty, assuring the faithful and the faithless that his religion had nothing to do with wealth as an economic factor, or the hire of laborers kept back by fraud, or the injustice by those who should get an honest livelihood in the good age-old rural occupation of plowing and sowing and reaping fields, whether they be the good ground of the Palestine parable, the promised land flowing with milk and honey, corn and wine and oil, the great virgin plains of Iowa, Nebraska and Illinois or the teeming wheat fields of the Red River Valley which have made the great open prairie places of the northwestern commonwealths the bread basket of the world – an empire conquered and won for the republic by the sturdy virtues, the tough brawn and muscle that challenged and overcame rivers, mountains and deserts, in the covered wagons of myriad forefather pioneers.

The Old Historic Church Speaks

Therefore does the same old historic Church speak out officially now in this new world the same message that the Apostle James the Younger spoke out two thousand years ago as the first Bishop of Jerusalem and cousin of the Lord, even though he was stoned to death for proclaiming it by order of the high-priest Ananus, as it is written in the *Antiquities* of Flavius Josephus. Let Adam Smith and every Manchesterist poisoned by the atmosphere of Reformation secularism cry out from the house tops that religion has nothing to do with wealth or poverty as economic factors, that industrial and social ethics should form no part of the Catholic moral code, and Catholic teachers will slink away meanly cowered at the mere crack of every plutocratic whip, satisfied with the servile toleration that condescends to the preaching of only a truncated gospel. Perish the abject thought!

We stand by the side of Leo, who wrote for every priest anointed to preach the Gospel to the poor – “that body of citizens, by far the great majority who sustain life by their labor:” – “Neither must it be supposed that the solicitude of the Church is so preoccupied with the spiritual concerns of her children as to neglect their temporal and earthly interests. Her desire is that the poor, for example, should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and better their conditions in life; and for this she makes a strong endeavor. . . . For all agree,” says the great Pope, “and there can be no question whatever, that some remedy must be found, and found quickly, for the misery and wretchedness pressing so heavily and unjustly at this moment on the vast majority of the working classes.”

And turning back his apostolic eyes to the point whence have moved up the hands of the clock of this progressive time, he sees that, “The ancient workingmen’s guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other organization

took their place. Public institutions and the very laws have set aside the ancient religion. Hence by degrees it has come to pass that workingmen have been surrendered, all isolated and helpless, to the hard-heartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition. The mischief has been increased by rapacious Usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with the like injustice, still practiced by covetous and grasping men. To this must be added the custom of working by contract, and the concentration of so many branches of trade in the hands of a few individuals; so that a small number of very rich men have been able to lay upon the teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself.”

There do we see delineated by the Papal pen the dire economic effects of the Reformation teaching which proclaims, to this decadent aftermath of a Christian civilization, the first and last commandment of the Manchester school, which has written with the blood and tears of poverty across the face of this pagan modern world that religion must have nothing to do with the economic factors of wealth or poverty, of capital or labor. But like all those young disciples inspired by the ringing notes of that great encyclical, the sovereign pontiff proceeds to turn back mediaevalwards the hands of this rundown clock of modern and Manchesterist secularism.

Religion and Political, Economic Life

Should religion have anything to do with the political and economic life of states and nations? “On this subject we need but recall for one moment the examples recorded in history. Of these facts there cannot be any shadow of doubt: for instance, that civil society was rennovated in every part by the teachings of Christianity; that in the strength of that renewal the human race was lifted up to better things – nay, that it was brought back from death to life, and to so excellent a life that nothing more perfect had been known before, or will come to be known in the ages that have yet to be.

“Of this beneficent transformation Jesus Christ was at once the First Cause and the final end; as from Him all came, so to Him was all to be brought back. For when the human race, by the light of the Gospel message, came to know the grand mystery of the Incarnation of the Word and the redemption of man, at once the life of Jesus Christ, God and Man, pervaded every race and nation, and interpenetrated them with His faith, His precepts, and His laws. And if society is to be healed now, in no other way can it be healed save by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions.”

Question of the Hour

“At the time being,” says Leo, “the condition of the working classes is the pressing question of the hour; and nothing can be of higher interest to all classes of the state than that it should be rightly and reasonably adjusted. But it will be easy for Christian workingmen to decide it aright if they will form associations, choose wise guides, and follow in the path which with so much advantage to themselves and the common weal was trodden by their fathers before them. Prejudice, it is true, is, mighty, and so is the greed of money; but if the sense of what is just and rightful be not debased through depravity of heart, their fellow-citizens are sure to be won over to a kindly feeling towards men whom they see to be in earnest as regards their work and who prefer so unmistakably right dealing to mere lucre, and the sacredness of duty to every other consideration.”

Perhaps, indeed, religion has nothing to do with wealth and poverty, with capital and labor as economic factors in the material well-being of our civilization. Listen with open and unprejudiced and docile ears and hearts to Leo. “If we turn now to things external and corporeal, the first concern of all is to save the poor workers from the cruelty of greedy speculators, who use human beings as mere instruments of money-making. It is neither just nor human so to grind men down with excessive labor as to stupify their minds and wear out their bodies. Man’s powers, like his general nature, are limited, and beyond these limits he cannot go. His strength is developed and increased by use and exercise, but only on condition of due intermission and proper rest. Daily labor, therefore, should be so regulated as not to be protracted over longer hours than strength admits. How many and how long the intervals of rest should be must depend on the nature of the work, on circumstances of time and place, and on the health and strength of the workmen. Those who work in mines and quarries, and extract coal, stone, and metals from the bowels of the Earth, should have shorter hours in proportion as their labor is more severe and trying to health. Then, again, the season of the year should be taken into account; for not infrequently a kind of labor is easy at one time which at another is intolerable or exceedingly difficult. Finally, work which is quite suitable for a strong man cannot reasonably be required from a woman or a child. And, in regard to children, great care should be taken not to place them in work shops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed. For just as very rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so does too early an experience of life’s hard toil blight the young promise of a child’s faculties, and render any true education impossible. Women, again, are not suited for certain occupations; a woman is by nature fitted for home work, and it is that which is best adapted at once to preserve her modesty and to promote the good bringing up of children and the well-being of the family. As a general principle it may be laid down that a

workman ought to have leisure and rest proportionate to the wear and tear of his strength; for waste of strength must be repaired by cessation from hard work.”

Industrial and Social Ethics

Who will dare to say now that religion has nothing to do with these economic factors, that industrial and social ethics should have no part in its moral teaching? Leo himself commands us to enter this great struggle and commends those who have already taken up the cause of the laboring poor: “Those Catholics are worthy of all praise – and they are not a few – who, undertaking what the times require, have striven, by various undertakings and endeavors, to better the condition of the working class without any sacrifice of principle being involved. They have taken up the cause of the workman, and have spared no efforts to better the condition both of families and individuals; to infuse a spirit of equity into the mutual relations of employers and employed; to keep before the eyes of both classes the precepts of duty and the laws of the Gospel – that Gospel which, by inculcating self-restraint, keeps men within the bounds of moderation, and tends to establish harmony among the divergent interests, and the various classes which compose the state. Others, again, strive to unite workingmen of various grades and associations, help them with their advice and means, and enable them to obtain fitting and profitable employment. The bishops, on their part, bestow their ready good will and support; and with their approval and guidance many members of the clergy, both secular and regular, labor assiduously in behalf of the spiritual and mental interests of the members of such associations. And there are not wanting Catholics blessed with affluence, who have, as it were, cast in their lot with the wage-earners, and who have spent large sums in founding and widely spreading benefit and insurance societies, by means of which the workman may without difficulty acquire, through his labor, not only many present advantages, but also the certainty of honourable support in days to come.” (Leo XIII, *On the Condition of the Working Classes*.)

This is the ringing message from the Pope of Rome, Leo XIII, to put religion back into economic things, into industrial and social and political activities, in a word, into all the individual and corporate life of all the people of all the nations. It was that message that has since inspired the social teaching of the hierarchies of Germany and France, of Italy and Spain, of Great Britain and Canada, and most important of them all, for us, the youngest and most numerous bench of bishops in the world, the hierarchy of this great land so full of hope and promise, the United States of America.

Article LIII

Catholic Social Reform

We will pursue yet further the line of thought suggested in our last two articles. It is a most necessary thing. For after all there are only two classes of economists, classical economists and Catholic economists, Manchesterist or Christian. We can take our leading from only two sources in this field of industrial and social ethics, Christianity, mediaevalism, Leo XIII and the *Rerum Novarum*, or paganism, Reformation, Adam Smith and Manchesterism. "Economic science has grown up in Christian lands, and could not escape the influence of its environment. The relations between religion and economics are well worth discussing, even though they are somewhat obscure." (Cunningham, *Christianity and Economic Science*, p. 1.)

It was precisely because the classical economists committed this great error of divorcing religion and ethics from economics that their teaching has fallen into such unpopularity and disrepute. They constructed to their own taste what they imagined to be the ideal economic man. He was a cold, bloodless sort of individual, composed in equal proportions of self-interest and avarice. He recognized no measure of value except the pecuniary one. They abstracted from this monster all motives of patriotism, honor, or religion. This inhuman economic scientific product could not and should not be influenced in thought or action by any natural ethical, or supernatural Christian considerations. Their ideal citizen was a purely acquisitive being.

The Old Economists

"There is not much fault to find with the old economists so long as they recognized that their science was an abstract science, which for its own purposes dealt with an unreal abstraction – the economic man. Every science is obliged to isolate one aspect of reality in this way. But when political economy was treated as a philosophy of life, it began to be mischievous. A book on *The Science of the Stomach*, without knowledge of physiology or the working of other organs, would not be of much use. Man has never been a purely acquisitive being: For example, he is also a fighting and a praying being." (Dean Inge, *Outspoken Essays*, p. 22.)

The elimination of all motives except the avaricious one from economic life produced a complete sterility of classical political economy. It is only quite recently that men are coming forward to attempt restoration of the old forgotten motives of charity and justice, duty and religion, into the study and theory of industrial, social and political economy. If we approach the study of industrial and social ethics from this viewpoint, the facts of economic history will make it

apparent at once how economic life can be determined for good or evil by a man's religious beliefs and environment. This determining influence at any given period of the history of civilized society will vary with the varying stages of religious and economic activity in any particular country. For example, in pagan times, especially when no strong beliefs in pagan divinities influenced the lives of men, when no dogmatic faith was universally recognized, religion had no pronounced effect in the economic field, and slavery was the result. On the contrary, when a period like the Middle Ages is examined critically, a period when every individual and institutional thing was penetrated deeply, and dominated strongly, by faith in a single Divine religious and moral teacher, the consequence was an ideal Christian industrial and social order, however short people here and there may have fallen of realizing in practice their guiding ideal.

Pagan Revival

Our own times are such as existed once before. There is a strong pagan revival which we are trying to describe under the general caption of the economic effects of the Reformation. There is a decay of dogmatic religion and a corresponding absence of any religious influences affecting economic, social, industrial or political theories. So much is this the case that the average man of any or no belief of a religious nature will resent the claim that moral considerations should determine his viewpoint and resulting line of action in any of these fields of human endeavor. That is the reason why the 18th century, the so-called century of enlightenment, witnessed the birth of a new, and until then, unheard of independent science of economics, because the same century also witnessed a widespread decay of all religious beliefs. The religion of the Reformers themselves was petering out into religious fads and philosophic fancies.

Divorce of Religion and Ethics

This development of economics as an independent science culminated in *The Wealth of Nations*, the *magnum opus* of Adam Smith which appeared in the year 1776. The movement in the direction of Manchesterism, which is the divorce of religion and ethics from economics, had begun in the previous century, though, to be exact, it was originally due to the breaking down of the unity and authority of Christian dogma which had been going on since the middle of the sixteenth century. This was the period of the Reformation.

"The further we go back, therefore, the more marked becomes the influence of the religious on the economic life of Europe, until we reach the Middle Ages, the period at which it exerted its greatest strength. What renders the Middle Ages so

important in this respect is that it is the only period in history in which economics was regarded altogether from the standpoint of ethics, and in which ethics was included within the jurisdiction of the universal and infallible religious authority. In the Middle Ages anything approaching economic science in the modern sense was unknown. The great doctor of the thirteenth century, who dealt with every department of Christian life and duty, knew nothing of a science of political economy, either in the sense in which it was understood by the mercantilists, as aiming at increasing the prosperity of the state, or in the sense in which it was understood by the classical economists, as stating the principles upon which people do habitually act in their economic affairs.

“St. Thomas Aquinas, in so far as he deals with economic life at all, deals with it simply as a branch of general ethics. When it is remembered that the science of ethics was at that time dealt with exclusively by ecclesiastics in the light of revelation, as well as in that of natural reason, and that the moral life of the individual was controlled by ecclesiastical legislation enforced by spiritual sanctions, it will be understood how intimate must have been the connection between the religious and the economic life of Europe in the Middle Ages.” (*The Economic Effects of the Reformation*, pp. 4-5.)

A very important consequence of the close connection between the material and the spiritual life of man was the strict subordination in mediaeval times of all commercial and industrial activities to the moral law. This necessarily maintained a certain rigid standard of business honor and good faith in social dealings. Then again, the eternal insistence of the Church on the vastly superior importance of spiritual riches subordinated all material and pecuniary standards of worldly success and happiness.

Just Perspective and Correct Proportion

This just perspective and correct proportion of things bred and preserved in the individual and society a clear sense of the due and relative importance and value of standards. “The mediaeval Church had as little sympathy with the fanatics who wished to ignore this world in order to fix their eyes exclusively on the next, as it had with those avaricious and worldly people who ignored the next world in order to fix their eyes exclusively on this.”

The Church, then as now, approved and encouraged every legitimate business. She was no enemy of material progress, as can be seen from the magnificent monuments bequeathed to us from these older times. It did not retard any literary or artistic progress because the regulation of every activity of secular life was thought to be a matter to be approached from the standpoint of Christian ethics, and Christian ethics were matters to be pronounced upon by a great and dominant

Church. The whole fabric of mediaeval civilization rested upon a religious basis, and the whole complexion of everyday life was colored by these ideas, just as the whole complexion of modern life is colored by certain ideas of its own which can hardly be called religious or Christian in any very strict application of these terms. As Professor Foxwell puts it: "It would be hard to say whether the average man of today would be more astonished at the mediaeval ideas of corporate responsibility and vicarious punishment than the mediaeval would be at our anarchical competition and flagrant usury. But it is certain that each would find the other's notion of fairness positively scandalous."

Schapiro puts it this way: "The mediaeval man had an *idée fixe*, religion which entered as a blend into all his thoughts, political, economic, scientific or artistic." (*Social Reform and the Reformation*, p. 98.) As Dr. Cunningham has it: "During the Middle Ages human activities were dominated by religion, while in modern times political and economic life has been secularized. . . . In the old days life had been treated as a whole; all institutions had religious as well as political aspects; but in the course of the centuries the two sides fell apart, and life could be conveniently divided into sections." (*Christianity and Economic Science*, pp. 3 and 76.) "In the inner harmony of the system of the Middle Ages the economic order found its parallel in the political order, and was even reflected in the spiritual order, and projected in the conception of another world. The mediaeval conditions resulted in a long period of organic and stable society." (Foxwell, "Introduction" to Menger's *Right to the Whole Produce of Labor*, p. XIII.)

Something to Learn

Our own times, then, it would seem, have something to learn from the Catholic social effort of more Christian days which we hope are not passed away for ever. The few aspects of that Catholic effort which are here presented should convince us of the need and the possibility of applying the principles of Catholicism to our public life. "The work is one which calls for much concerted study, for energy and patience, and for a resolute suppression of personal jealousy, class intolerance, or local prejudice." (*Catholic Social Work in Germany*, by Charles D. Plater, S. J., p. 137.)

The ideal conditions that we are all working for are still far away. If more ideal conditions prevailed in times past, they were not the result of chance, but the fruit of long and patient struggles for the supremacy of right and justice in human dealing. The advice given to the clergy of Ireland a few years ago applies with equal force to all of us who should be striving to bring in the new day. "I will ask you to study the questions at issue, in the light of your ethics and theology; and, in case you have no fault to find with the main current of the movement, to make

such allowance as the priests of Ireland made in Land League days, for the excesses that must accompany a struggle of the kind. You are good men; and would not consciously oppose anyone, however humble, in fighting for his rights. The humbler and weaker he is, the more unwilling you would be to strike him; unjustly and consciously, that is. Only beware of prejudice, which has often blinded men as good as you; and remember that we are all, naturally, disposed to favour the class to which we belong. Also that, as a rule, priests do not belong to, and have not sprung from, the class of hired laborers by whom strikes are conducted.” (*Some Ethical Aspects of the Social Question*, by Rev. Walter McDonald, D. D., pp. 3-4.)

Article LIV

The Secularizing of Economic Ethics and Politics – The Secular State

The classical economists secularized industrialism when they divorced the science of political economy from ethics and morality. Among the religious problems of today, one of the most ominous is the general tendency among nations to secularize the state also. This does not mean that the state has not a sphere of her own independent of the church, but that the state is also independent of morality, and free from any respect for moral sanctions. “To the writers of these essays the stupendous disarray of European civilization is due to the renunciation of God by the nations, and their repudiation of the Catholic tradition of the vassalage of every nation to the Kingdom of God. To us, the decadence of personal morality, believed by the devout within the churches to be due to the weakening of Faith in dogmatic religion, is the inevitable aftermath of the abandonment at the Reformation of religious sanctions as the basis of social and international life. That Christian morality survived so many centuries is a testimony to the social ethics of Christendom.” (*The Return of Christendom*, p. 84.)

There are two reasons for this tendency towards state secularism, or rather two sides of one and the same reason. One is the modern revival of paganism outside the Church, the other is the bad effect of this pagan atmosphere and influence on the weak brothers and sisters within the Church, at least nominally. Very probably we should not like to admit to ourselves just how much that mephitic atmosphere has weakened the moral fiber of those who are compelled by the exigencies of life to live and move and have their being in this spiritually and morally unwholesome environment which goes under the sobriquet of modern civilization.

Destroying Civilization with Civilization's Arts

"It would be ridiculous to compare our modern pagans with the Goths, the Vandals, the Lombards and the Huns. One may be convinced that these moderns will destroy civilization just as surely as did the barbarians, but they will not destroy it with fire and sword, with pillage and rapine and plunder. They will destroy civilization with the arts of civilization.

"In a word, we are concerned with polite pagans, civilized pagans, in some cases pagans of very nice culture, of high intelligence, and of great education. Our pagans are after the manner of Antony and Cleopatra, of Caesar and Seneca, of Horace and Petronius, of Lucullus and Maecenas, of Poggio and Bocaccio, rather than of Attila, or Genghis Khan, or the Sultan of Zulu, or Sitting Bull. In a word, our modern paganism is another Renaissance, a recrudescence of the paganism of the golden age of Augustus and Tiberius Caesar; and especially of the later Roman empire, when civilization rose so high that it toppled over; when culture became so ripe that it turned rotten; a paganism that was concomitant with the highest civilization and the basest corruption that the world has even seen . . . And one of the predominating characteristics of our days, as of the days of decadence in the Roman empire, is that religions are dying and philosophies reviving.

"Witness 'Christian Science,' the most popular and successful of modern substitutes for religion. It is itself not a religion, but a philosophy, or rather a patchwork composed of odds and ends, shreds and fragments of false philosophies, put together in an amateurish way by a sadly uneducated Yankee woman. I say it is not a religion. The essence of religion is worship. In Christian Science there is no worship. The official manual of the sect, 'Science and Health,' inculcates neither prayer nor worship of God. . . . Poor, deluded, modern pagans! Why do they not understand the saying of a wise observer, 'There are new things and true things, but the new things are not true, and true things are not new.' " (*The Catholic World*, December, "The Revival of Paganism," by the editor.)

There is, then, a revival of paganism. It is a materialist temper of mind that worships the merely visible and temporal even while denying their existence as a mere illusion. As Monsignor Benson wrote, "Mark Twain" was more than humorous when he said that "Mrs. Eddy and the Pope will divide between them the allegiance of professed Christendom." "In fact," says Benson, "Christian Science as a whole, in these relations as in all others, is perhaps the furthest development possible in the direction of pure Protestantism in its earlier stages." (*Non-Catholic Religions of England*, p. 199.) That great revived pagan world must be converted anew to the doctrine of Christianity. If it is not altogether delivered over to a reprobate sense, its conversion will be slow and will necessarily entail perhaps the

total destruction of the gods it adores before it is ready to experience that salutary fear of the true God which is the beginning of wisdom.

Outside of and distinct from this perverse generation, there is another mass of people struggling along honestly, as they see it, but still all alienated from the Church and even suspicious of her intentions in their regard. In times past they had the Catholic religion stolen from their fathers and the claims of another foisted upon their allegiance under false pretenses. Because of a continuous uninterrupted deceptive propaganda of calumny against the real objects of the Catholic Church in the world, they are wary of accepting her protestations at their face value.

A Widespread Feeling

“Everywhere there seems to be a widespread feeling amongst the people that the Church represents a party in the state rather than the people at large; that she is allied with certain vested interests rather than with the common welfare. And until this popular discontent is allayed, the anti-clerical propaganda will find support, if not in the active sympathy of the multitude, at least in their apathy. Anti-clericalism is, in fact, the temper of the hour amongst large masses of the people both at home and abroad, and it will increase and flourish until the mass of the people is persuaded that the influence of the Church is exerted for the general good, that the Church is the guardian of popular liberty and that her action in the state is for the benefit of the people themselves.

“The Church, said Cardinal Manning, has no longer to deal with dynasties but with the people; and that is true in a deeper sense than appears on the surface. Whether rightly or falsely, the Church has come to be regarded as having interests apart from the multitude, and so far as she has got out of touch with the people. To remedy this unfortunate condition of things, to win back the people’s confidence and regain her own liberty of unfettered intercourse with the people, is now one of her most urgent needs.” (*Catholic Ideals in Social Life*, by Father Cuthbert, O. S. F. C., pp. 22-23.)

A Dominant Feature

One of the dominant features of this present age is its effort at social reconstruction in spite of all the forces of revived and refined paganism that are working to drag or to precipitate society into the abyss. Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, even such an effort could hardly be said to exist. The poor and the working classes in Anglo-Saxon countries silently bore their misery and degradation. The thoughtless and the wealthy scarcely gave a thought to their existence. Both classes viewed each other as passing strangers. Morally speaking,

the rich and the poor formed two nations; humanly speaking, they were ignorant of each other's habits. The national conscience has been awakened from that bad and dangerous lethargy. Classes now know that they have duties towards each other whether they fulfill them or not. Von Kettler and Manning and Leo XIII have not lived in vain. Nobody would deny today that the poor and the weak have a claim upon the rich and the mighty. The amount and trend of economic legislation bears witness to this fact of mutual claims and responsibilities. The immense impetus given to the growth of religious and Catholic endeavor by Leo's encyclical cannot be overestimated. It is all a part of a great Catholic revival which we have described already as a great spirit moving over the troubled waters of post-Reformation chaos. In a word, it is described as mediaevalism, which is a restoration of religion to civilization. It is fighting a life and death struggle with those other manifestations which we called a revived paganism. That is what we meant farther back when we said the great battle of the twentieth century would be fought out between the mediaeval and the modern idea.

A Great Decisive Struggle

Hilaire Belloc lectured in Dublin after his American tour a year ago. He stated that there was a great and decisive struggle going on in America. It would be decided in the next generation. There were two great forces at work in American civilization. The Catholic Church on one side and a spirit of secularism on the other. Only one of these forces would survive in another generation. The Church in America would cease to be because it would have lost its soul; or it would have converted American civilization to the Christian ideal. Yes, indeed, Catholicism or paganism is the only alternative. Both currents now are running strong, paganism with its fads and fancies seeking to dominate American life and the Catholic spirit, which we called mediaevalism, seeking to Christianize it.

In England the latter spirit has nearly won, thanks to the great Oxford movement and the consequent Catholic revival. In America the battle still rages and victory is still doubtful for even such acute observers as Hilaire Belloc. When that embodied Catholic spirit challenges the Catholic hosts in the shape of a thousand movements for social and industrial reform, and a renewal of a distinct Catholic outlook on life, let us all pray that none of our sentries shall be found peacefully slumbering at his post. What a pity to allow that spirit to go by unrecognized, when it comes unto its own, and its own shall receive it not – that beautiful spirit that died out of the world when its sacred temples were profaned in the sixteenth century.

“During nearly four hundred years of English history it was reviled and spit upon, and then it returned, disguised at first, cautiously showing its face to friends until it had once more the right to sit in the market place. It entered into the

literature of England, wherever men lived again in the past of Christendom, wherever souls yearned for the faith and blessed peace that were symbolized by the spirits of Lincoln and Canterbury, wherever the spell of modern pessimism was broken by sacramental mirth. Occasionally the hovels of the poor were shaken; and it got inside the gates of Oxford. Poets were thrilled with the rich music of mediaeval life, and thinkers battled with modern thought, clad in the armor of the schools. The world was shaken with memories and though many were heedless or distrustful or filled with rancor, those who loved them were given new courage and new vigor. They chanted songs that had long been forgotten and voiced hopes that had been changed into despair. While the world about them reeled in the din of its delusion, they stood serene; and when they wept their tears were pure.” (Dr. G. N. Shuster, *The Catholic Spirit in Modern English Literature*, pp. 2-3.)

The Question

The question for all of us to ask ourselves is this. Shall we carry on the splendid continuity of Christendom or shall we break with it forever? We must take sides. We must be either mediaeval or modern, Catholic or pagan. The opposing spirits are described admirably by that sweet, frail and wandering minstrel of mediaevalism, Theodore Maynard, in his *Ballade of a Ferocious Catholic*:

There is a term to every loud dispute,
 A final reckoning I'm glad to say:
 Some people end discussion with their boot;
 Others, the prigs, will simply walk away.
 But I, within a world of rank decay,
 Can face its treasons with a naming hope,
 Undaunted by faith's foemen in array –
 I drain a mighty tankard to the Pope!

They do not ponder on the absolute,
 But wander in a fog of words astray.
 They have, no rigid creed one can confute,
 No hearty dogmas riotous and gay,
 But feebly mutter through thin lips and grey
 Things foully fashioned out of sin and soap;
 But I, until my body rests in clay,
 I drain a mighty tankard to the Pope!

I've often thought that I would like to shoot
 The modernists on some convenient day;

Pull out eugenists by their noxious root,
 The welfare-worker chattering like a jay
 I'd publicly and pitilessly slay
 With blunderbuss or guillotine or rope,
 Burn at the stake, or boil in oil, or flay –
 I drain a mighty tankard to the Pope!

L'Envoi

Prince, proud prince Lucifer, your evil sway
 Is over many who in darkness grope:
 But as for me, I go another way –
 I drain a mighty tankard to the Pope!

Article LV

The Religious Aspects of Social Reform

A paper on the subject of the religious aspects of social work was read at the Catholic Conference at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1901 by Father Cuthbert, O. S. F. C. It is typical of the attitude of Catholic leaders in the English Church ever since the beginnings of the Catholic revival down to the present day. It is stimulating for us to read it even now, after the lapse of twenty-four years. It is interesting also because from these writings of English Catholic leaders we are enabled to see how far behind we in the American Church are in many movements that are intensely Catholic in tone. Probably it is because England is so much nearer Rome geographically that these men take up such work earlier and more strenuously after Rome has spoken out on some such distinct phase of Catholic action, as Leo XIII did in so certain a voice in the Encyclical on the Conditions of the Working Classes in 1891.

“To keep one’s eyes open to the facts of life is in one sense the beginning of wisdom,” says Father Cuthbert. “We cannot close our eyes to the facts without danger of disaster. The facts of a situation may, perhaps, not fit in easily with our preconceived theory of what life ought to be; in that case, it is probable that our theory is at fault, too narrow, perhaps, or based upon false premises. So, if it is said – and one does hear it said even yet – that the proper place for a priest is his sacristy, or that the layman has no part in the Catholic apostolate, we at once turn to the world as we see it, and find that these theories do not square with the facts. If the world today is influenced by the priest, it is just because he does not confine his spiritual activity within the walls of his sacristy, but, like Christ Himself, goes forth and moves amongst the seething crowd, giving a helping hand wherever he can.

“Again, if the Church in England has been able to save thousands of homeless children from moral and spiritual death, and if, as is the case, the position of Catholicism is better understood and more respected than it was fifty years ago, is not this due in large part to the work of the laity? Of late years the influence of the layman in religious affairs has enormously increased, both within the Church and without. Amongst ourselves the laity have taken a noteworthy part in placing Catholic dogma before the non-Catholic world and making it intelligible to those not accustomed to Catholic terminology. Still more have they taken up work of a social character in the interests of religion. In doing so, it must be admitted that they have but fallen into line with the non-Catholic world.” (*Catholic Ideals in Social Life*, pp. 127-128.)

English Labor Party

When Father Cuthbert wrote this paper, the English Labor party was just a year old as a parliamentary organization. It consisted of only two members. In the near future again, perhaps, it will be ruling the greatest empire the world has ever known in power and in extent. Their jurisdiction will extend over just one-fourth of the surface of the globe. In 1909 the Dominican Prior, Father Vincent McNabb, paid high tribute to Ramsey Macdonald because the young labor leader echoed in his book, *The Socialist Movement*, the tenets of Leo XIII, and his criticisms of the existing defects of our social system. We remember well the epithets applied to the same labor leader by the press and public opinion of that same day. A few years ago London went wild in its welcome to Ramsey Macdonald, whom the great capital of the British empire hailed as its next premier. No wonder His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales began an after-dinner speech by saying, “we are all socialists now.” That was after the labor leaders had dined with His Majesty King George V at Buckingham palace.

The first appeal for Catholic post-war reconstruction of the social order was the ringing message of His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster. It appeared a few months before the armistice in 1918. It was such a pronouncement as one would expect from the see of Westminster and the successor of Cardinal Manning. *The Month* for March, 1918, recorded the impressions created by the promulgation of the Cardinal’s pastoral as follows:

“Just over forty-four years ago the Archbishop of Westminster delivered a memorable lecture at the Mechanics’ Institution, Leeds, on ‘The Dignity and Rights of Labour.’ It was a bold pronouncement for those days, when the shadows of the old political economy lay heavy on the worker, but Archbishop Manning never lacked courage in defense of the oppressed and, in that lecture, he claimed not only reverence for the dignity of labour, but a full acknowledgment of its

rights. Moreover, he showed that these rights were exactly the same as those possessed by capital: The right of personal ownership, the right of liberty, the right of association. It was a clear declaration, as far as it went, of the Christian ideal as opposed to that of the Servile State.

Present Social and Industrial Conditions

“Now, in days far different, another Archbishop of Westminster has with even greater force and clearness and fullness come forward to state for the benefit of his flock the judgment of Christianity on present social and industrial conditions, and the principles which must be followed in the coming reconstruction of society, if it is to be built upon peace and justice.

“This keen diagnosis of our social and economic ills, wherein their origin and history are carefully traced and their remedies boldly prescribed, comes with all the freshness of a real, living and life-giving evangel in the midst of the Earth-bound projects of the modern economist, long unaccustomed to regard man as God’s creature and to base human rights on the Divine eternal law. Into this masterly document, in brief compass yet without confusion, are compressed the fundamental doctrines of Catholic social reform, so eloquently voiced by Leo XIII and Pius X, and the spirit of Him who ‘had compassion on the multitude’ breathes through the whole.

“Through the splendid enterprise of the Westminster Catholic Federation, this great pronouncement was promulgated, *urbi* if not *orbi*, by its insertion in *The Times* of February 15, and, we understand, in other leading papers, and it cannot fail to bring, before the eyes of thousands of outsiders, the stirring message which Catholicity has for a war-weary and sin-cursed world.”

A New Order

Cardinal Bourne in the opening paragraph notices world conditions in general and finds in them matter for serious concern. He notices signs of unrest, well-known to those in authority, which portend the possibility of grave social upheaval in the future. He accepts the fact that a new order of things, new social conditions, new relations between the different sections in which society is divided will arise as a consequence of the destruction of the formerly existing situation. In this transformation the Catholic Church has her part to play. What is that part to be in England and in the empire?

Before answering such a momentous question, it is highly important that we should understand how the present conflict in the industrial and social world arose.

Like all the great thinkers of modern times, he has to look back to the great Middle Age for light and leading.

“We may, in this summary, consider first the principles which, in the main, governed the various classes of this nation, and of other Christian nations, in their dealings with one another prior to the religious disruption of the sixteenth century. Men then, as now, desired to make their way in life; they entered into competition with one another; they were prone, then as now, to yield to temptation, to overreach or to deal unfairly with their fellows. But the good and well-disposed had a guide, the self-seeking found a check, in the accepted principles that environed them. Competition in trade or industry, perfectly legitimate in itself, had yet so to be co-ordinated that the right of the individual worker to a true human existence should not be made dependent upon the unrestricted gain of him for whom he toiled, nor the interests of the community sacrificed to the aggrandizement of the successful individual. And before the minds of all – peasant, laborer, manual worker, tradesman, landowner, professional man, titled peer of the realm, and sovereign of the kingdom – there was ever present the certainty of a complete account to be one day rendered to a Just Judge, the Maker of Rich and poor alike.”

These principles of Christianity have remained deeply imbedded in the mind and heart of the English people. He goes on to say, “that they have influenced for a long space, and still influence to some extent, instinctively rather than consciously, the legislation of this country.” And saddest of all with the gradual disappearance of the authority which alone could enforce and give sanction to them, those who still follow these principles very often do not know why they do so, neither can they give an answer should their validity be challenged.

A New Relation of Society

“Thus gradually and almost imperceptibly a new relation of society came into being; and men and women, of high aim and of avowedly Christian belief, came to be dominated by ideas which had no ground in, or dependence upon, any Christian principle. Those who have studied the matter in detail have told us at length of the terrible conditions existing in this country less than a hundred years ago, in which conditions all thought of the rights of each individual soul or of the community as a whole was obliterated, and men felt no qualms about the practical enslavement and degrading impoverishment of multitudes in order that a few might possess and command the resources of almost unrestricted wealth. Desire of gain at all cost, without reference to the consequences thereby entailed upon vast numbers of the nation, became a ruling principle. The true end and purpose of existence were forgotten; the right of the individual received little thought; the interests of the

community were sacrificed to the exaggerated well-being of the few. Wealth and material prosperity to be obtained by those who were able to attain them were a sufficient object for this life. In too many cases any higher aim was deliberately excluded or regarded as so problematical as to be undeserving of serious thought. An enormous development of trade took place. On the surface there was prosperity which seemed to admit of no limit or setback, and our teachers of even only forty years ago told us complacently that the economic system and development of England were of a very perfect kind, and worthy of imitation by less enlightened and less progressive nations.” (Pastoral Letter of Cardinal Bourne on “Catholics and Social Reform.”)

We submit these extracts and ask our readers to meditate on them prayerfully. There is much to be learned from them and great need that it be learned as soon as possible. Compare what the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster has to say of England and English life, industrial and social, with conditions in another Anglo-Saxon country with which our lot is cast. Does his message not apply here with equal force? We are not alarmists. The popes and cardinals and archbishops and bishops and theologians that we are quoting are not red radicals. They are the sanest and most conservative men in the world. What folly, then, to close one’s eyes and ears as if there was some special virtue in being oblivious to the great drama that is being enacted in the world around us, of which by divine command we are the appointed teachers and moral leaders.

An Erroneous Opinion

“It is the opinion of some, and the error is already very common, that the social question is merely an economic one, whereas in point of fact it is above all a moral and religious matter, and for that reason must be settled by the principles of morality and according to the dictates of religion. For even though wages are doubled and the hours of labour are shortened, and food is cheapened, yet if the workingman harkens to the doctrines that are taught on this subject, as he is prone to do, and is prompted by the examples set before him to throw off respect for God and to enter upon a life of immorality, his labors and his gain will avail him naught. Civil society, no less than religion, is imperilled; it is the sacred duty of every right-minded man to be up in defense of both the one and the other.” (Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical on “Christian Democracy,” Jan. 18, 1901.)

As Father Cuthbert put it and we repeat it, to keep one’s eyes open to the facts of life is in one sense the beginning of wisdom. We cannot close our eyes to the facts without danger of disaster, even though the facts do not fit in easily with our preconceived theory of what life ought to be.

Article LVI

*How Heretical Doctrines Are Considered Conservative
by Uninstructed Catholic Folk*

In our last article we indicated how what are considered commonplaces of Catholic teaching with regard to social and industrial reform in England are considered radical and quasi-heretical doctrines, even in some Catholic circles in the United States. It has always been to us a sort of unaccountable mystery how that attitude of mind on the part of a certain class of adaptable Catholics came to be thought and accepted as most conservative and orthodox in proportion as it contradicts the trend of official pronouncements on the subjects we are discussing. Still, it is a phenomenon that the moral teacher much recognize and deal with, much as the apologetic teacher must deal with a kindred mentality in trying to convince his opponent with regard to the dogmas of Faith. If the will to believe be lacking, what is the force of the most conclusive arguments on the human intellect even when it is forced by objective evidence to accept them as decisive? In like manner also, if the will to do be conspicuous by its absence, how little is the impression made by the most eloquent and convincing proofs of the moral guide, even though it be the One whom all saw to teach like to One having authority, even though they admitted that never before did man speak like this Man?

There are a few prevalent pet shibboleths before which one is reduced to utter impotence, sheer intellectual helplessness in any combat where cold logic merely is relied upon to clinch a controversy. "It may be true, and I do not know whether it is or not, but whether it is or not, it is un-American."

If a statement like that is hurled at your head, what chance has a papal encyclical, or a bishop's pastoral, or a paradox of Chesterton, or Funck-Brentano on the Middle Ages? You may say what you like, and quote any authority you wish, and pile up quotation after quotation from the greatest minds of this or any other age, but criticize the smallest flaw in American manners or customs, civil, religious or economic, social, political or industrial, and it all comes tumbling down like a house of cards about your head, and you are left weak as water poured out, before the crushing charge, "that though the speaker has nothing to say against John Henry Newman or Leo XIII, von Kettler, or Cardinal Manning; Cardinal Gasquet on the Reformation, the Oxford Movement or the Catholic Revival, the Reconstruction Program of the United States Hierarchy, or the common teaching of Catholic moralists for now two thousand years, still we are living in a free country, and I want my children to be just plain, ordinary, one hundred per cent Americans, uncontaminated by any of this Bolshevism stuff, or social science, or whatever else these mere professors of moral theology call it."

What They Called Us

Zangwill or T. P. O'Connor or somebody with only mere book learning to recommend him, called us "the best half-educated people in the world," but really it is grossly exaggerated hyperbole, quite excusable in people who wanted to say nice things about us, knowing how sensitive we really are about being accused of any such impractical weakness for even half-diluted mental improvement! It is really an Anglo-Saxon disease that has been cured in the mother country, because its population is preponderantly Celtic outside of textbooks in ethnology, just as one should pretend due patriotic solemnity of countenance when an after-dinner speaker refers to our neighbors across the river as "we Anglo-Saxons," oblivious of the fact that every schoolboy now-a-days has access to such learned reference works as the *City Telephone Directory*.

Knowing full well, then, how hopeless our task is, but trusting that ultimately the good seed may germinate even in the most unfavorable soil, and conscious too that no seed can bring forth fruit unless it be trampled into the ground and die, we go on to tell what great churchmen have been saying and doing in other lands, and with what result, and against what odds apparently insurmountable at first sight. Their names and deeds are perennial founts of inspiration for those engaged in the monotonous drudgery of trying to convince men of truth, of justice and of judgment against their wills.

Evolutionary Morality Discarded

The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster began his great pastoral on "Catholics and Social Reform" by asking the peoples of the British Empire to discard the theory of evolutionary morality that for long had been the guiding principle of nations which seemed to have accepted a crude materialistic hypothetic evolution as a full scientific explanation of all the facts and mysteries of life both here and hereafter.

"Other nations," he said, "had been learning the lesson — notably the confederation of nations which is now our chief enemy. With the thoroughness of purpose and scientific determination that characterize her, Germany has sought a worldwide predominance by setting boldly and consistently before herself those materialistic aims which for too long deluded and misled our English people. She desires 'her place in the sun;' and, as might was only too often right in the industrial struggles within the limits of our own people, so, imbued with the same principles, happily to an increasing extent now discarded among us, she claims that might is right in the world domination for which she is now struggling to her doom.

“Happily, do we say, are these false principles being discarded among us; for, were it not so, the future of our peoples would be as overcast as is the future which the economic lusts of our enemies are bringing rapidly upon them.

“The last thirty years have shown a surprising return to saner doctrines and sounder principles in the teachings of our economists, and in the practice of our people, a return all the more astonishing because it has been instinctive rather than logical, and has little definite relation to religious teaching. God has watched over us in this respect, in spite of all our national sins and shortcomings, as He has so often done in the history of the past. Youthful ardour, self-sacrifice in face of common danger, recognition of the rights of all who do their part in the nation’s struggles, no less than the compelling necessity of the moment, have led the peoples of the empire to an abandonment of materialistic aims, and to a giving up of desires based purely on the present life, which would have seemed incredible not so many years ago.” (*Catholics and Social Reform*, by Cardinal Bourne.)

Germany, of course, was no better or worse than any other great industrial country. The indictment is general. If their philosophy of life were correct, how could one logically quarrel with their practical conclusions? Let the fittest and the strongest only survive. Brute force was to be the only determining factor. If the nations had already accepted that principle in economic things in their internal affairs, and brute acquisitive competition was the only law of industrial, commercial and social life, why should there be a more Christian and ethical standard adopted for the regulation of their external dealings with foreign governments and peoples in their international, diplomatic and war-like dealings with each other?

If justice and right and charity are discarded and completely shut out in the struggle going on between different classes of the population in the same country, who at least often think that their interests clash even when in reality they do not, what good reason can be adduced why the golden rule and the “Sermon on the Mount” should be invoked, as soon as nations whose interests diverge make appeal to the arbitrament of the sword or submarine or poisoned gas? If the moral teacher has no right to tell the private individual what moral law prescribes in the regulation of his business dealings with his fellow citizens, what right has the same individual or any corporate body of individuals, to appeal to moral obligation against the encroachments of autocratic or democratic governments, when they deem it to be to their best interests to crush out foreign rivals for trade or commerce, by all the means which modern science has put at the disposal of the ordnance departments of their war and navy offices? We must be consistent, at least.

A Reaction

As the Cardinal points out, there has been a reaction against this jungle morality of the nineteenth century. But this reaction is not yet a universally accepted code to which even all Catholics are ready to bow their heads in humble submission. We are a stiff-necked generation. Though, as the pastoral points out, the last thirty years have shown a surprising return to saner doctrines and sounder principles in the teachings of our economists, and in the practice of our people, we are only in the very beginning of a conversion of heart. We are just doing a little spade work. The return is all the more astonishing because it has been instinctive rather than logical. There is the great pity of the whole affair.

Here are we Roman Catholics sitting supinely and idly by, while we allow the men and women of England's Labor party, who in the majority of cases profess no religious creed of any denomination, to discover all unconsciously and instinctively, rather than logically and consciously, our great traditional Catholic heritage of moral and ethical policy as it touches the economic, industrial and social life of the nation and the world. What we say of the good honest workers of England, we say also of the good honest rank and file of the men and women who do the hard work of the world everywhere.

Like our Divine Master, how can it be very wrong for us also to have compassion on the multitudes, especially the multitudes of these English-speaking countries, who give us in return for the little that we do for them, an abundance of those good things, which we were taught to pray for to our Heavenly Father as our daily bread.

What the Working Classes Are Suffering From

"It seems to me," says Father Plater, S. J., "that the working classes of this country are suffering from suppressed Catholicism. The old pre-Reformation instincts for freedom and security have broken the husk of an un-Christian economic theory and practice." Father Husslein, S. J., says that what Father Plater has said of England is true of the whole world. "Suppressed Catholicism is at the center of the great social unrest. Suppressed Catholicism is the spirit struggling for liberation beneath the crackling, breaking, bursting shell of an unnatural and un-Christian social order. It is the pre-Reformation spirit of social freedom, which the Church alone can prevent from degenerating into lawlessness or injustice once it has achieved its liberation." (*The World Problem, Capital, Labor and the Church*, Husslein, S. J.)

Shortly before the outbreak of the Great War it was calculated that four per cent of the population of England held ninety per cent of all the wealth of the country.

In the United States, sixty per cent of the wealth was owned by two per cent of the people, while at the other extreme of the social scale sixty-five per cent of the population, representing the labor element, the main factor in the production of wealth, possessed no more than five per cent of the total riches of the land. Need we wonder that the Church calls upon us all to aid in bringing about a more reasonable and universal distribution of private ownership by means of an equitable social legislation? (See Husslein, S. J., *op. cit.* pp. 4-5.) Because, as Father Cuthbert pointed out, “to keep one’s eyes open to the facts of life is in one sense the beginning of wisdom. We cannot close our eyes to the facts without danger of disaster.”

Article LVII

Mere Good Faith in the Profession of a False Religion is No Substitute for the True One

Cardinal Bourne did not accuse any individual or corporation of conscious injustice when he demanded that present conditions would have to change. The present order of economic life which made these conditions possible had too long prevailed in England, with the result that hundreds and thousands accepted it as the only right and good order. They accepted it in the same good faith as they accepted the religion of their parents as the only right and true religion. “When a false social and political economy still held unrestricted sway in England, many God-fearing and honorable men were the unwitting accomplices of a system which had blinded and mastered them.”

But just as in religious matters mere good faith in a false religion is no real substitute for the profession of the true one, so also in economic, social and industrial life an ethically injurious system, even though it be only materially bad for want of formal knowledge of its immorality, is not to be preferred to a Christian system of social and industrial life. There are two ways of effecting a change, of reconstructing the post-Reformation social and industrial order. One urges a policy of despair. They have looked, they tell us, in vain in various directions for a solution of the problems of the age. Religious teaching, they tell us, gives no coherent answer to their question. They are driven thus to the unwelcome conclusion that the existing relations of society are incapable of being remedied. No matter what happens, they say, things cannot be worse than they are at the present time. “Let, then,” they proclaim, “the existing order be overthrown and destroyed in the hope, baseless or well-founded, that out of the chaos and destruction some better arrangement of men’s lives may grow up. It is the policy of which we see the realization and the first-fruits at the present time in Russia.” (Cardinal Bourne, *Pastoral*.)

Christian Social Reform

The other way is the way of Christian social reform. The Cardinal states that “the vast majority of our people are held back, if not by religious motives, at least by their inborn practical sense, from suicidal projects of this kind. In this turmoil of uncertainty, in this longing for teaching and guidance, what is the place of those to whom God has given, and who have accepted, the fulness of the Divine Revelation under the authority of the Church of Jesus Christ? Will their voice be heard if, amid the clamor, it be upraised? If they be heard, have they a real message to deliver?”

That the world will turn finally to the Catholic Church for a remedy for its ills seems probable, if we judge from the tendency already so noticeable in that direction. “Again, social reformers of every school are turning more and more to Catholic tradition for their inspiration; and even in the aspirations and demands of extremists we may often discern that belief in the value of human personality, that insistence upon human rights, that sense of human brotherhood, and that enthusiasm for liberty which are marked features of Catholic social doctrine.” (*Catholics and Social Reform*, Bourne.)

The Cardinal says that Catholics are not concerned for the moment with exclusively Catholic interests, but with those common problems of national importance which have recently become so acute. It is a moment when all Catholics should reflect seriously upon their duties as citizens and upon that special contribution to the common welfare which they are enabled to make as representatives of an age-long and worldwide tradition.

“The Catholic Church has helped to bring social order out of chaos in times past; many of our countrymen feel that her help is much to be desired in the coming reconstruction. They recognize, for instance, that she is able to combine social stability with liberty, and thus to avoid the calamities both of anarchy and tyranny, into one or the other of which this country might easily drift.

“It is well for us to recall that the present social dislocation has arisen precisely because the teaching of the Catholic Church had been forgotten. In the sixteenth century England broke away from the religious unity of Europe. The popular faith was violently ousted, and the spiritual authority of the Pope rejected. In course of time religious individualism gave place to religious indifference, and the twentieth century found the bulk of the people in this land frankly uninterested in Church or chapel.

Individualism and Its Consequences

“But the old Catholic social ideals and practices had also vanished; and here, too, a fierce individualism produced disastrous consequences. England came under the dominion of a capitalistic and oligarchic regime, which would have been unthinkable had Catholic ideals prevailed, and against which the working classes are now in disguised revolt.

“Capitalism began really with the robbery of Church property in the sixteenth century, which threw the economic and social advantage into the hands of the land-owning and trading classes. The industrial revolution in the eighteenth century found England already in the hands of the well-to-do classes. Since then the effect of competition uncontrolled by morals has been to segregate more and more the capitalist from the wage-earning classes, and to form the latter into a proletariat, a people owning nothing but their labor-power and tending to shrink more and more from the responsibilities of both ownership and freedom. Hence the increasing lack of self-reliance and the tendency to look to the state for the performance of the ordinary family duties.

“The English oligarchic spirit took its rise from the same sources as English capitalism, and by the beginning of the twentieth century was closely bound up and dependent on it. The territorial oligarchy had by then thoroughly fused with the commercial magnates, and the fusion had produced plutocracy. While the constitution had increasingly taken on democratic forms, the reality underlying those forms had been increasingly plutocratic. Legislation under the guise of ‘social reform’ tended to mark off all wage-earners as a definitely servile class. The result, even before the War, was a feeling among the workers of irritation and resentment, which manifested itself in sporadic strikes, but found no very clear expression in any other way.” (Cardinal Bourne, *Catholics and Social Reform*.)

We give this long quotation from this very responsible churchman in order to show what religious leaders in other lands are writing and speaking on this very important subject. If we ourselves wrote that down under or over our own signature, there would be hands thrown up in holy horror at the imprudence of a youthful clergyman harboring such terrible ideas, and so uncautiously expressing them. Therefore we allowed the Archbishop of Westminster to speak it in the first person, knowing the effect produced on timid minds by the great authority of His Eminence’s own words.

Dominant Feature of Present Official Teaching

As we go on to develop the religious aspects of social reform, we will ask the reader to note the fact that in our times especially, the dominant feature of official

Catholic teaching is its effort at social reform and reconstruction. All the Popes since Pius IX, the leading cardinals in each country, the hierarchies of the different nations collectively and individually, the best known names among moralists and ethicists, stand out not as silent witnesses indeed to this fact, but as the very articulate leaders in this great movement of Christian and patriotic endeavor. All the more it is a cause of wonder to us to find that there seems to be an alarming ignorance of this trend in Catholic moral teaching among our own people in the Church in America. What the causes are we will try to diagnose in another place, but for the present we must go patiently on, unfolding in a quiet, unobtrusive way this body of doctrine which the Holy Roman Catholic Church has been dispensing to her flocks, through her learned and zealous chief pastors, for the past half century.

Catholic Social Doctrine Not New

We would ask the reader also to note another very important fact in this connection. It is the fact of the suppressed Catholicism of this movement for industrial and social reform, even in the ranks of the common ordinary working people when these same people are not members of the Catholic Church. In this respect, indeed, there is very little difference between the Catholic and the non-Catholic workingman, because what definite knowledge has the average Catholic workingman about the traditional teaching of his own Church? He is just as ignorant often in these matters as his fellow worker of some other or no denomination at all. A man cannot take pride in those things of which he is in ignorance. This is a great pity, especially when we do possess this great body of doctrine given us in recent times by the authorities mentioned above. And it is no new doctrine that is being just invented to meet the exigency of the times. It is our ancient traditional teaching that is being recalled to the minds of the present generation by those good householders who bring forth from the treasure house of the Catholic deposit of moral teaching things old and new.

Who will not aid by word and deed to help bring the suppressed Catholicism of this reform movement out into explicit and formal adoption, by striving to show our countrymen of every class that they are, as Cardinal Bourne says, only instinctively groping after those things which the Catholic Church has taught for two thousand years as the Divine representative of an age-long and world-wide tradition? We believe that the Catholic who opposes industrial and social reform is contradicting the workings of the Holy Spirit in this present day and generation.

"I say it is well that we should take note of the religious character which invests the social movement of our time; for it is becoming more and more evident that if the Church is to win the allegiance of the mass of the people, it must be by the

application of religious principles to the social problems of the hour. The Church has never yet gained the multitude by theological argument, but by the manifestly good effects of her teaching upon the condition of their daily life. When the people recognize that wherever the Church has power and influence, their life becomes invested with greater happiness and dignity; when they see that Christianity in practice means justice and a sense of responsibility on the part of the strong or wealthy towards the weak or poor, then and then only are they moved to listen to her teaching.

“They judge of the teaching by its fruits, as it comes within the scope of their own life. It is all very well for the Church to promise them happiness and freedom from pain in the next world; they want some sort of assurance of the future even in this life. The Church may not be able to take away all suffering and misery, but they demand that life should be made more tolerable than it is as a result of the Christian teaching. And after all, is not this a fair argument? If Christianity is what it professes to be, the law of charity, should it not operate for good upon the selfishness and injustice of the world? Should it not gradually take away wrong and lessen misery wherever it is the creed of the community? If it does not do this, then either Christianity itself has no vital power or its professed disciples are false to their creed.” (*Religious Aspects of Social Work*, by Father Cuthbert, O. S. P. C.)

Article LVIII

Leaders in Church and State Must Give An Answer to the Questionings of the Age

Cardinal Bourne, who like every other leader of men has his eyes and ears open to the changes and questionings of the times in which we are living, believes that leaders must give an earnest, sincere answer to these questionings. The Great War has profoundly changed the minds of men. “Dull acquiescence in social injustice has given way to active discontent. The very foundations of political and social life, of our economic system, of morals and religion, are being deeply scrutinized; and this not only by a few writers and speakers, but by a very large number of people in every class of life, especially among the workers. Our institutions, it is felt, must justify themselves at the bar of reason; they can no longer be taken for granted.”

The armies of the different countries turned out great fighting machines, and what was left of them came home to be the nucleus of great thinking machines. Their contacts under the most trying circumstances tended to give them a wider and more liberal comprehension of national and social issues. Different classes and widely different occupations were blended together in a great common mass, which under the self-respect and personal discipline of their common and hard life developed the characteristic army scorn for the mean and spineless ways of the

self-seeking politician and shallow, empty, insincere, platitudinous talker of phrases which had no soul of honesty to recommend them to men who had grown rightly suspicious of official utterances and bureaucratic ways. Their hardships, their pains, the sudden and mangling deaths of their comrades-in-arms, all the horrors of these bad and terrible years in the filthy trenches of modern warfare, drove their thoughts back to religious instincts now long forgotten. A change has taken place in the minds of these men little short of revolutionary. This change has had its reactions on the minds of those who remained at home, forced as they were also to make their contribution in some wartime capacity towards the common object of the nations. The hard work of munition factories of every description, the long hours, the cajoling in turn of flattery and censure, irritating mismanagement, the unjust, often immoral, unpatriotic and deceptive business cunning of profiteers, and dollar-a-year patriots, tended surely in their cases also to resentful suspicion of public authority and political leadership. And then at last when the glad news came that all was over, and a peace treaty was imposed that brought no peace, but famine and distress and the imminent danger of further struggles, greater than the one that they had vainly supposed was to be the last; in a word, when the active, suffering participants of the greatest war in history discovered that they had been let down, mingled feelings of despair and desperation keep the changed minds of the common people in a ferment of revolt. They are anxious about the future. There are new problems facing them. The social order has failed to adjust itself automatically. Normalcy was only a new word for the same old insincere political ineptitude.

It is at this point that political leaders of the old pre-war school failed to live up to their promises and one by one they have been discarded; and if political democracy has failed in one country after another in Europe, it is not because democracy was found wanting, any more than that Christianity had proved a failure, but because, as Cardinal Bourne points out and a Belloc and others had pointed out before him, "while the constitution had increasingly taken on democratic forms, the reality underlying these forms had been increasingly plutocratic." Christianity had not been tried, neither had political democracy been given a fair chance to prove its worth. Civilization is threatened socially, industrially, politically, and religiously. Everybody realizes that determined effort must be put forth to save it. Even the Protestant churches are alive to this menacing outlook now hanging threateningly over the future of bruised and disillusioned humanity.

No Divorce Between Religion and Economics

“In no case can the Christian admit that there can be any permanent divorce between religion and economics, since no aspect of life is to be exempt from the sway of Christ. Unless Christian principles are really applicable to industry, we cannot claim finality or universality for Christianity. Whether the final consummation of the ideal is to come sooner or later, by slow degree or by sudden cataclysm, it is our plain and unescapable responsibility as Christians to give ourselves with all our might to Christianizing all our social life.” (Committee on the War and Religious Outlook, representing thirty-two Protestant denominations.)

The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, speaking the mind of the Catholic Church in England, sees likewise in all the manifold bitterness of the times a great challenge to his own Church which we rightly claim to be alone the true one. Looking coolly into the industrial, social and political disorders which are shaking the very foundation of ordered society in his own country, he says:

“It is here that Catholic guidance, if offered with understanding and sympathy, is likely to commend itself. But this means that Catholics must clear their own minds of prejudice, and must deliver not their own message, but the message of the Catholic Church. If their minds are formed in accord, for instance, with the great Encyclicals of Leo XIII, they will seize the opportunity with courage and with a great trust in the people, and a still greater trust in God. They will work for social stability and liberty, for justice and charity, and help to draw together in national unity the sundered and embittered classes.

Catholic Principles of Social Reform

“The Catholic principles of social reform cannot fail to commend themselves to the millions of men and women in this country, in whom a passion for social righteousness has been stirred; who, in the shock of war, have discovered and have revolted at the social unfairness which has prevailed for so long.

“Is it surprising that these people, suddenly awakened to the un-Christian features of our civilization, should in their zeal for reform and their consciousness of power be tempted to root up the wheat with the tares? If some of them, cut adrift as they have been from Christian influences, are suspicious of all religion, as well as all political organizations, our task must be not to denounce them as impious revolutionaries, but to show them that the Catholic Church alone can purify and realize their aspirations. They simply do not know, for instance, that Leo XIII has denounced, in terms as strong as they themselves are likely to use, the greed and self-seeking which have laid upon the working classes ‘a yoke little better than slavery itself.’ ” (*Catholics and Social Reform*, Cardinal Bourne.)

Surely from these words of the Archbishop of Westminster's pastoral letter we can easily see that in his mind there is no trace of that timidity born of ignorance which is our greatest handicap in convincing American Catholics of their duty before the like challenging circumstances of American social, industrial, and political life. Even in those leading features of modern labor unrest, though their expression may be crude and exaggerated, he still recognizes the true lineaments of the Christian spirit. Its passion for fair treatment and for real liberty; its resentment at bureaucratic interferences with family life; its desire for self-realization and opportunities of education; above all, its conviction that persons are of more value than property – all these he thinks surely give the Catholic and the workingman points of contact and promise a sympathetic welcome to our Catholic message for the world in which we live.

The Bounden Duty of Catholics

It is the bounden duty of Catholics, especially those who by their profession are the leaders and teachers of their generation, to show to the honest common man and woman what is involved in these excellent and truly Christian and Catholic ideals, for which Catholics time and again have most strenuously labored and suffered. And here is a passage that we would like to print legibly and hang up before the desk of every Catholic capitalist in these United States, because their cry here and there and everywhere has been, Catholics cannot afford to teach these doctrines just at this time. They are too dangerous mental food for an already extreme class of agitators to get hold of, and through them inflame the minds of the ignorant working classes. Above all, we must be prudent. The great thing is reticence. This is a species of propaganda that is far from the minds of the really prudent men to whom we look for light and leading. It is certainly the very antithesis of Cardinal Bourne's platform of Catholic social action as expressed in the following paragraph:

"If we review the main principle of Catholic social teaching, we shall observe how many of the utterances of 'modern unrest' are merely exaggerated or confused statements of those very principles; and since, it has been truly said; 'the Catholic Church is not afraid of enthusiasm,' we should not find it hard to put before the most ardent their own ideals, in a more coherent and satisfying form than they could do it for themselves. If they take their stand upon the dignity of man, whether rich or poor, we can show them how every human being, created by God and redeemed by Christ, has a much greater dignity than they had dreamt of. If they claim for every human being a right to a share in the fruits of the Earth, a right to live a life worthy of man, we endorse that claim with Divine sanctions. If they protest against industrial insecurity and the concentration of capital in a few hands,

we point out how they are suffering from the blow aimed at the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. If they have had a hard fight to establish the right of association in trade unions, it was because the Catholic voice had been silenced in the land. If their instinct for education and self-realization has been stirred, it is but the awakening of an instinct among the people in Catholic days before our universities and secondary schools were diverted from their original purpose.” (*Catholics and Social Reform*, Cardinal Bourne.)

Conditions of Gaining a Hearing

As the Cardinal repeats again and again, when people come to see that we share their aspirations, they will be more ready to listen when we show them what these aspirations involve. They will no longer have any stomach for false prophets and specious theorists. They will understand how might is not right, no matter how high and mighty it may be. They will know that the Christian concept of society does not make of it a conglomeration of warring atoms, but a brotherhood of man under the benign fatherhood of a good God. They will learn that property has rights sooner, by convincing them that these rights have been exaggerated at the expense of the more sacred rights of human personality for which Catholic teaching must not be made falsely to sponsor. Finally, they will come to see that the Catholic ideal is no cruel, merciless, individualistic, grasping war where every man's hand is raised against every other man's, but a cordial co-operation among all classes of society where every one is convinced of the Catholic truth, that every one is his brother's keeper and acts accordingly. The religious aspect of this policy, good in itself as all social reform is, must be evident and plain for all to see.

“Understanding all these truths as parts of one Christian scheme of life, may we not hope that the people of this country will come to have a new conception of what Christianity means? Finding a guide whom they can trust in the complex problems of today, will they not examine the claims of the Catholic Church to guide them in those religious perplexities which, under the pressure of war, they are beginning to feel?” (Bourne's *Pastoral*.)

If this last statement of the Cardinal be true, then the conclusion we think is evident, *viz.*: That those Catholics, whoever they pretend to be, who oppose the Catholic program of social reform, are contradicting the workings of the Holy Spirit in His designs for the religious reconstruction of an all but pagan world. There is eternal life and death involved in the conflict between the mediaeval and the modern idea.

Article LIX

Platitudes No Substitute for Stern Principles

How often do we hear the saying trotted out by Catholics from platform and pulpit, that the Catholic Church alone has the real remedy for the ills of society? We all give a platitudinous truth of that harmless kind, an equally harmless notional assent. We can imagine even a stray self-satisfied capitalist, rich with all the good things that wealth can procure, sitting contentedly before such a speaker and not at all inclined to resent that prudent presentation of a great historical supernatural fact. Giovanni Papini drew a picture of the Synagogue on the peaceful Sabbaths of olden times, whither came to worship the God of their prosperous fathers, the comfortable and highly respectable business men who sat so piously twirling their fat thumbs, as they nodded holy assent to the ancient rendering and prudent comment on the Ancient Word of the Ancient of Days. Let us read between its lines, because the picture is drawn by the master-hand of genius:

“The small property owners, the small business men, the gentry of Capernaum, all have come. They are men of weight and piety. They stand in the front row, serious, their eyes cast down, satisfied with the business of the last few days and satisfied with their conscience because they have observed the law without failing and are not contaminated. The line of their well-clad backs can be seen, bowed backs, but broad and masterful, employers’ backs, backs of people in harmony with the world, and with God, backs full of authority and of religion. There are also transient foreigners, merchants going towards Syria or returning to Tiberias. They have come from condescension or from habit, perhaps to try to pick up a customer, and they stare into everybody’s face with the arrogance which money gives to poverty-stricken souls.” (*Life of Christ*, Papini, p. 79.)

And we will give Papini’s picture of the back of that same synagogue, on that same Sabbath day, for we too make no distinctions, worshipping before the common altar of our common God:

“At the back of the room the poor of the countryside are huddled together like dogs near a door, like those who always stand in fear of being sent away. The poorest of all, those who live by odd jobs, by ungracious charity and also – oh, poverty! – by some discreet theft, the ragged, the vermin-ridden, the timid, the wretched; old widows whose children are far away, young orphans not yet able to earn a living, hump-backed old men with no acquaintances, strengthless invalids, those who are incurably sick, those whose wits no longer rightly serve them, who have no understanding, who cannot work. The weak in mind, the weak in body, the bankrupt, the rejected, the abandoned, those who one day eat and the next day do not, who never have enough to satisfy their hunger, those who pick up what others throw away, the pieces of dry bread, fish-heads, fruit cores and skins; and sleep

now here and now there, and suffer from the winter cold and every year wait for summer, paradise of the poor, for then there are fruits to be plucked along the roads. They too, the beggars, the wretched, the ragamuffins, the sickly and the weaklings, when the Sabbath comes, go to the synagogue to hear the stories of the Bible. They cannot be sent away; they have as much right to be there as anyone, they are sons of the same Father and servants of the same Lord. On that day they feel a little comforted in their poverty because they can hear the same words heard by the rich and the strong. Here they are not served with another sort of food, poorer and coarser, as happens in the homes where the owner eats the best and the beggar on the threshold must content himself with scraps. Here the fare is the same for the man of possessions and him who has nothing. The words of Moses are the same, everlastingly the same for him who owns the fattest flock and for him who has not even a quarter of lamb on Passover day. But the words of the prophets are sweeter to them than those of Moses, harder on the great of the world, but kinder for the humble. The poverty-stricken throng at the back of the synagogue waits every Sabbath for somebody to read a chapter from Amos or from Isaiah because the prophets take the part of the poor, and announce the punishment and the new world. ‘And he who was clothed with purple shall be made to handle dung.’ ” (*Life of Christ*, Papini, pp. 79-80.)

Preaching the Gospel to the Poor

It reads like a story, but it is a real historical fact that one fine day on the Sabbath there was One Who came expressly for the sole purpose of preaching His Gospel to the poor, “Who talked for them, Who had come back from the desert to announce good tidings for the poor and the sick. No one had ever spoken of them as He did, no one had shown so much love for them. Like the old prophets, He had for them a special affection which offended more fortunate men, but which filled their hearts with comfort and hope.

And behold, when Jesus had finished speaking one could observe how those who occupied the high-priced pews, the elders, the bourgeois, the masters, lords, Pharisees, men who knew how to read and make money, shook their heads forebodingly, and got up, making wry faces and nodding among themselves, half contemptuous, half scandalized; and as soon as they were outside, muttered a grumbling of prudent disapprobation through their great black and silver beards.

But the others remained behind. The working men, the poor, the shepherds, the peasants, the gardeners, the smiths, the fishermen, and all the herd of beggars, orphans without inheritance, old men without wealth, homeless outcasts, friendless unfortunates, penniless men, the diseased, the maimed, the wornout, the rejected. And when He came out from the synagogue, all those stood waiting in the street to

see Him again. They followed Him timidly, as if in a dream. They went along together beside the shore of the lake. They made bold and began to ask Him questions. And Jesus paused and answered this obscure crowd with words never to be forgotten.

Prophet's Words Fulfilled

Those that prudently disapproved of the teaching of this youthful Prophet never forgot, either. They thought up various ways and means of ensnaring Him in His speech. If something is not done, all the people will follow Him, and the Romans will come and take away our country. And something was done secretly. But the third day He arose again from the dead. The Romans did come and took away the things that were dearest to their hearts. And the Prophet's words were fulfilled to the letter. "If thou hadst known, and that in this, thy day, the things that are to thy peace: but now they are hidden from thy eyes. For the days shall come upon thee: and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee, on every side. And beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee: and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone: because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation." (Luke XIX, 42-44.)

They had their opportunity. It never came again. And so it is today, too. We should be all very happy if the moral teacher never came down to brass tacks, but went on harmlessly weaving nice, poetic, vague generalities. But as soon as the finger is placed on some sore spot, there is the rub. Then wise heads are shaken forebodingly, and men get up and walk away, making wry faces, and nodding among themselves, half contemptuous, half scandalized; and, as soon as they are outside, mutter a grumbling of prudent disapprobation, all the while feeling good and pious and prosperous, in harmony with the world and with God, full of authority and of religion.

Civilization Threatened

Leo XIII, the Vicar of that same Preacher in the Synagogue, sees a like fate overtaking civilization now because men have not known in these latter days also the things that are to their peace. "Nations and even vast empires themselves cannot long remain unharmed, since, upon the lapsing of Christian institutions and morality, the main foundation of human society must necessarily be uprooted. Force alone will remain to preserve public tranquillity and order; force, however, is very feeble when the bulwark of religion has been removed; and, being more apt to beget slavery than obedience, it bears within itself the germs of ever-increasing troubles. The present century has encountered notable disasters; nor is it clear that

some equally terrible are not impending. The very times in which we live are warning us to seek remedies there where alone they are to be found – namely, the re-establishing, in the family circle and throughout the whole range of society, the doctrine and practices of the Christian religion. In this lies the sole means of freeing us from the ills now weighing us down.” (*The Duties of Christians as Citizens*, Leo XIII.)

“Civil society, no less than religion, is imperilled; it is the sacred duty of every right-minded man to be up in defense of both the one and the other.” (Leo XIII, *The Condition of the Working Classes*.)

Crisis for Catholics

Cardinal Bourne echoes this teaching of the Sovereign Pontiff when he tells us that the present time is the great crisis for Catholics. “If, then, it be true that there are many ears open to receive our voice, should we Catholics remain apathetic at this critical moment? The opportunity may never come again. If we stand aside from the social movements of the day, they will go forward without us, and our message may never be delivered. Can we face such a responsibility when we remember the fate that might overtake a country which has abjured Christian teachings? (Bourne, *Catholics and Social Reform*.)

Old easy-going ways may be very nice and comfortable, but the social movements of the day continue to go forward without us. The time for platitudinous political prudence is passed and gone. We are being sifted like wheat. “From the platform and in the press we have loudly assured our fellow-Britons that in Catholic ethics the remedies for all social disorders can be found. As a rule, however, our non-Catholic hearers do not receive such declarations seriously. They imagine that, if they were to take the trouble to scrutinize our economic prescriptions, they would find therein little more than a few amiable platitudes about brotherly love. The time has come to show them that there is nothing, from a lightning strike of busmen to a Capital Levy, on which the Church is unable to supply guiding principles of more than human wisdom. With splendid pluck a few Catholics here and there have taken up such work; and most earnestly do we hope that 1924 will not grow old before recruits will come to the aid of these pioneers in tens of thousands.” (*The London Tablet*, editorial, Dec. 29, 1923.)

Let us put away all tardiness. Let us have no foolish fears of ignorant opposition. We are very late in beginning this important Catholic work of social reform. The great prophetic office of the Church is no secondary object of her institution. “I would recall the stinging words with which Cardinal Gibbons prefaced the Bishops’ Program of Social Reconstruction, calling attention to the fact that the proposals therein made, which to many would seem so startling, were the forgotten

principles slumbering in the pages of our textbooks on moral theology. . . . But it is notorious that until recently the great encyclicals of Leo XIII have received very little attention in this country; and even now very little serious attempt is made by the clergy to inculcate their teachings or to arouse the laity to an exhaustive study of them and the questions they involve.” (Rt. Rev. Joseph H. McMahon, Catholic Educational Assn. Report, 1923.)

Article LX

An Open Letter to the Right Honorable James Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister of England

The social and economic message of Cardinal Bourne’s *Pastoral* takes on an added significance on account of the political happenings in Great Britain at the moment. The following article drew a personal letter of thanks from the Right Honorable James Ramsay Macdonald, then Prime Minister of England. The author prizes this communication very highly, coming as it did from the first labor Premier of Great Britain to occupy the historic mansion at 10 Downing Street, Whitehall. The vast and tremendous importance of these events ought to give us all pause. Probably, if not actually, the hand of England’s social and industrial clock has been put back four hundred years, to that good old mediaeval day when the Catholic yeomen of England owned the soil of their country. The far-seeing Dominican, Vincent McNabb, must reflect with pride now on the welcome he extended so generously to Premier Ramsay MacDonald’s book more than a decade ago, when this good and learned priest declared that the English Labor party was the only organized body that was attempting to translate the principles of Leo’s *Rerum Novarum* into practical politics.

The Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster

Glad, too, will be the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster when he makes his visit of courtesy to the new premier of Great Britain, for he can recall the passages he wrote in 1918, in that pastoral which we are here analyzing. He can say with all sincerity and frankness that he, speaking as the head of the old historic Catholic Church of England, told his people not to oppose blindly the proletarian revindications of our day and age. He can recall the very passages wherein he advised the Catholics of England to reflect and observe that the social teachings and many of the very utterances of modern unrest were merely the exaggerated or confused statements of the main principles of the traditional Catholic social teaching. He will remind the honest premier that now guides the destinies of the British Empire, for the Cardinal himself is no little Englander, that he wrote six

years ago that “the Catholic Church was not afraid of enthusiasm.” Did the illustrious churchman not say that the priests of the Catholic Church, if they were intelligently informed, and true to the loyalties which they owed to that pillar and ground of truth, should not find it hard to put before the most ardent their own ideals, in a more coherent and satisfying form than they could do it for themselves?

When MacDonald and his cabinet were mere labor leaders without a trace of that respectability which mean minds love to link with plutocratic prestige, Bourne was writing to English Catholics that these strong men, who were working so nobly to uplift the toiling multitudes of their fellow-countrymen, were but awakening an instinct developed among Englishmen in Catholic days and in mediaeval times. “If they claim for every human being a right to a share in the fruits of the Earth, a right to live a life worthy of man, we,” he said, “endorse that claim with divine sanctions. If they protest against industrial insecurity and the concentration of capital in a few hands, we point out how they are suffering from the blow aimed at the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century. If they have had a hard fight to establish the right of association in trades unions, it was because the Catholic voice had been silenced in the land.” (*Catholics and Social Reform*, by Cardinal Bourne.)

Cardinal Manning Remembered

Ramsay MacDonald himself will be led by these remarks of the reigning cardinal to think of that wet, foggy London day when the body of another great cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church was borne through the streets of England’s capital to its humble grave in Kensal Green, a grave that was decorated by two wreaths, one a cross of lilies of the valley from Queen Alexandrina Victoria, at its head, and the other from Michael Davitt, whose plan of campaign gave peasant-proprietorship to Ireland, lay at its foot. And his Celtic imagination will be thrilled again by the memory of that funeral cortege, for behind the bishops of the Church and the peers of the realm marched solid lines of London’s laboring men, strong, rough, honest men who are not ashamed to cry even at the funeral of a dead cardinal whom they knew to be their friend; for wasn’t his name Manning, and his grandmother – a Catholic, Elizabeth Ryan, one of their own?

Shane Leslie was in prophetic mood when he wrote in 1921 in his *Life of Henry Edward Manning*: “The greater number of the mourners who followed to the grave were drawn from the class who have lost most by the loss of the old religion, and who will yet decide what the last religion of England shall be.” Almost a century before Leslie’s day, Cardinal Manning wrote in his diary: “The course of Europe seems to be towards a development of national life and action by calling up into a political power larger numbers of the people. The middle class are such already –

they are an oligarchy, an intelligent, energetic, self-respecting class, but selfish and subjective. Now, the Catholic system is self-abolishing and objective.” (Manning’s Diary, 1839.)

He was then an Anglican. Years afterward, as an ultramontane Catholic, he said frankly: “Were I not Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, I would wish to be a great demagogue.” No wonder that the leading Catholic and Anglican laymen avoided his lecture platform. They could listen forever to Wiseman talking of art and humanism; but do you not see Manning? “Why, this man goeth with swaddlers.” Bishop McQuaid of Rochester wrote to Corrigan, later Archbishop of York: “These English bishops give good lessons which we do not learn.” He was referring to Cardinal Manning, who was fighting the battles of humanity and labor in the open platforms of England.

Ramsay MacDonald, we are sure, has read Ben Tillet’s letter to Cardinal Manning (June 8, 1891) apropos of Leo’s Encyclical on the Condition of the Working Classes, that Ben Tillet who wrote about Manning’s influence on himself as a labor leader: “How it burned and singed my nature and called out of the depths the primitive courage, and so the persistence which helped in the formation of the Gasworkers’ Union!”

The same Ben Tillet: “I have just been reading the Pope’s letter (the *Rerum Novarum*) – a very courageous one indeed, one that will test good Catholics much more effectively than any exhortation to religious worship. As you know, some of us would disagree very strongly with many of the strictures laid upon Socialism. These are minor matters. The Catholic sympathy abounds in a generous strength. I hardly think our Protestant prelates would dare utter such wholesome doctrine.” Leo had made a great gesture to the industrial workers of the world. “Catholic democracy has come at last, and lifted itself upon the wings of the English-speaking Churches.” (Leslie’s *Life of Manning*, page 381.)

The Labor Champion, Pope Leo XIII

When the present editor of *The Dublin Review* drops around to pay his respects to the new premier, he may remind him of Manning’s article in *The Dublin Review* for July, 1891, where the Cardinal Archbishop reviewed Leo’s Encyclical on the Condition of Labor: “Since the divine words, ‘I have compassion on the multitude,’ were spoken in the wilderness, no voice has been heard throughout the world pleading for the people with such profound and loving sympathy for those that toil and suffer as the voice of Leo XIII. This is no rhetorical exaggeration, but strict truth. None but the vicar of our Divine Lord could so speak to mankind. No pontiff has ever had such an opportunity so to speak, for never till now has the world of labor been so consciously united, so dependent upon the will of the rich,

so opposed to the fluctuations of adversity and to the vicissitudes of trade. Leo XIII, looking out of the watchtower of the Christian world, as St. Leo the Great used to say, has before him what no pontiff yet has ever seen. He sees all the kingdoms of the world and the sufferings of them.” (Manning, *Dublin Review*, July, 1891.) He will specially point out the last paragraph of Cardinal Manning’s review: “For a century the civil powers in almost all the Christian world have been separating themselves from the Church, claiming and glorying in their separation. They have set up the state as a purely lay and secular society, and have thrust the Church from them. And now of a sudden they find that the millions of the world sympathize with the Church, which has compassion on the multitude, rather than with the state, or the plutocracy which has weighed so heavily upon them.”

Belloc and Chesterton could spend a very pleasant evening with their old friend, the premier, also. They, too, have written like he has, about the evils of plutocracy and the Servile State. Because they are Catholics, they could remind the prime minister of the advice Cardinal Bourne gave to English lay Catholics about co-operating with their separated brethren: “Finally, we should co-operate cordially with the efforts which are being made by various religious bodies to remedy our unchristian social conditions. Without any sacrifice of religious principles, we may welcome the support of all men of good will in this great and patriotic task. Already certain important Christian organizations have been occupied in the endeavor to build up a common platform of social reform. Such efforts certainly deserve all the help, guidance and co-operation that we can afford them.

“Such, then, is the task, such the aim that we desire to place before you, that you may consider it in God’s presence. Never has a greater responsibility been given to Catholics of these lands than at the present time. We have it in our power to render to our fellow-countrymen, to the nation, to the empire, services of immense value for the common well-being.”

If Father Vincent McNabb comes up to London too, he can feel that there will be a welcome for him at 10 Downing street. He will be able to tell the premier that the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster in 1918 wrote to the priests of England, secular and regular: “It is a part of your mission, dear reverend fathers, to bring these matters clearly and plainly before your flocks, so that they may exercise any influence that they may possess in accordance with the social teachings of Christ and of His Church, and be the messengers to others, outside the flock, of what the Church actually teaches on these vitally important subjects.” (*Catholics and Social Reform*, Bourne.)

A Great Turning Point in History

And finally, if we were more important in the ecclesiastical world, we might be tempted ourself to address an open letter to the new Labor premier of England somewhat as follows: "You will, I am sure, excuse me for introducing myself to you so informally. My only reason for saluting you at this juncture is that I have been a great admirer for many years of the great work that was being accomplished by English labor leaders. I want to convey to you and your colleagues my congratulations, humble though they be, at this time when an event has taken place in England which marks the greatest turning point in its history in the last four hundred years.

"England has shown the world, at an hour when it sorely needs it, that there is still a hope for political democracy, and a bright future possible for industrial democracy. The grand work is by no means finished, the obstacles to complete success are many and great, yet I hope and trust that the star which has guided your course so far will light you and your honest party to the final shore.

"It may be of interest to you and a source of inspiration and encouragement in your trials to know that there are millions of honest men and women here in America who were thrilled as by the news of a great victory, because it was a triumph for the cause that is so dear to them, when they read that the leader of Great Britain's Labor party had taken over the government of the British Empire as prime minister of England.

"I have read your books, and those of some of your distinguished cabinet ministers, and I have found in them a new restatement of the eternal principles of justice and human rights. Thank God that there is one great nation left where the common people have once again made these moral principles peacefully triumph.

"We will still follow and watch your progress from afar, because we believe you, and the good men co-operating with you, are the chosen instruments of a Divine Providence that wills still to save the millions of Europeans who have been, and are, so sorely tried for the last decade of years. We always boasted of our orthodoxy, for we were in the company of popes and cardinals and prelates of the Roman hierarchy, in proclaiming our principles of social and industrial reform; but now we pride ourselves on our respectability also since His Majesty has summoned you to Buckingham Palace to head the government of the British Empire.

"Believe me, dear sir, to be an humble admirer who prays every blessing and success for you, your party, your cabinet, and the great cause you champion so well."

Article LXI

In the Long Run, Principle Pays Better Than Political Expediency

We have finished with Cardinal Bourne, the reigning Archbishop of Westminster. His appeal for a post-war Catholic reconstruction of the social order leaves nothing to be desired from the point of view of clearness and sincerity of statement. His pastoral letter on *Catholics and Social Reform* was written, we will admit, with the history and conditions of England primarily in his mind. But if we reflect even only a very little, we can apply the same condemnations and ask for a like reform for our own American conditions, which are, after all, more or less the effects of the same Anglo-Saxon historical events. The English cardinal's wise counsel, encouragement and inspiration, we are sure, will strengthen the timid and the ignorantly orthodox, who are often only too glad to take refuge behind the cloak of prudence and conservatism, as an easy substitute; for they sometimes display an appalling lack of moral courage in hewing to the line of Catholic Ethical truth.

Since a love for principle in the long run pays better than a conventionally accepted coquetry with political expediency, so tragically illustrated in the life of that great ecclesiastic, and also an English cardinal, the chancellor of Henry VIII, we are bold to state that today American religious life is suffering as much from the effects of the English Reformation as the mother country itself. The philosophy of Church history, now so obvious even for the cursory reader, surely means that the English Reformation is responsible for the profound cleavage that divorces religion and morality from the social and economic life of Europe and America to this day.

The Capital Event in the Great Struggle

We cannot too often repeat that this accepted and so-called prudent and conservative way of looking at this post-Reformation moral dualism is most unorthodox and secular. "The capital event, the critical moment, in the great struggle of the Faith against the Reformation was the defection of Britain. It is a point which the modern historian, who is still normally anti-Catholic, does not and cannot make. Yet the defection of Britain from the Faith of Europe three hundred years ago is certainly the most important historical event in the last thousand years: between the saving of Europe from the barbarians and these our own times. It is perhaps the most important historical event since the triumph of the Catholic Church under Constantine." (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc, p. 225.)

Europe became Christendom when it accepted the Catholic Church. That Europe for a thousand years was civilization. That Church, great and dominant, was the

soul, the vital principle, the continuity of Europe. It was that high renewal of the Middle Ages, the second spring and reflowering of Rome, revived with the virtue of a new Faith. That vulgar thing, the Reformation, which has ceased long ago to be a religion, against which it was at best only a protest, is now accepted as an excuse for not submitting to moral and intellectual superiority, which always offends social and moral barbarians.

“The Scandinavian, physically quite different from these tribes of the Baltic plain, comes into the game. Wretched villages in the mark of Brandenburg, as Slavonic in type as the villages of Bohemia, revolt as naturally against exalted and difficult mystery as do the isolated villages of the Swedish valleys or the isolated rustics of the Cevennes or the Alps. The revolt is confused, instinctive, and therefore enjoying the sincere motive which accompanies such risings, but deprived of unity and of organizing power. There has never been a fixed Protestant creed. The common factor has been, and is, reaction against the traditions of Europe.” (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc, p. 230.)

Had the Reformation been confined to these outer fringes of civilization, it would never acquire the respectability necessary to attract parasitical souls, who pick their religion just as they do their automobile, according to their social and economic standing in the community. But when England went over against Rome and Christendom, and the wealthy classes of Britain saw a splendid chance of stealing the patrimony of the Church and of the poor, civilization was given a deadly blow.

“The squires, twenty years after Henry’s death, had come to possess, through the ruin of religion, something like half the land of England. With the rapidity of a fungus growth, the new wealth spread over the desolation of the land. The enriched captured both the universities, all the courts of justice, most of the public schools. They won their great civil war against the crown. Within a century after Henry’s folly, they had established themselves in the place of what had once been the monarchy and central government of England. The impoverished crown resisted in vain; they killed one embarrassed king – Charles I, and they set up his son, Charles II, as an insufficiently salaried puppet. Since their victory over the crown, they and the capitalists, who have sprung from their avarice and their philosophy, and largely from their very loins, have been completely masters of England.” (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc, pp. 242-243.)

Industrial Capitalism

England, beginning to be plutocratic, joined the Reformation and made it respectable. The same plutocratic reformers, after the industrial revolution, gave us industrial capitalism. The same class have been the traditional rulers of England

from the reign of Henry VIII until the other day, when Ramsay MacDonald kissed the monarch's hand in Buckingham palace and the crown and the commons of England once more rule the kingdom, and can it be so very radical to believe that soon the crown and the commons will again begin to own a little of the soil of England, which was stolen from their Church and their fathers four hundred years ago by those plutocratic reformed squires, who lost England to the Faith and wrecked Christendom? When they get back their birthright in the soil of their country, is it not a pious wish to hope that they may come also to see their other birthright in that old historic Church, which through the mouth of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster now tells them again after the Catholic voice had been silenced in the land for four hundred years: "If they protest against industrial security and the concentration of capital in a few hands, we point out how they are suffering from the blow aimed at the Catholic Church in the sixteenth century." (*Catholics and Social Reform*, Bourne.)

This was the thought that made Leslie write that great sentence which may become historic when describing Cardinal Manning's funeral cortege: "The greater number of the mourners who followed to the grave were drawn from the class who have lost most by the loss of the old religion, and who will yet decide what the last religion of England shall be." (*Life of Manning*, Leslie, p. 496.)

That was the great thought and the high hope that inspired Cardinal Manning and his friend Cardinal Gibbons to whom he wrote this far-thrown sentence: "In the greatest commonwealth, and in the greatest empire of the world, the Church, Catholic and Roman, deeply rooted and daily expanding, calls the freed races of mankind to the liberty of Faith, the only true liberty of man. . . . We little thought when we were writing about the Knights of Labour in Rome, a few years ago, that every word would be so soon published to the world by an Emperor and a Pope. This is surely the new world overshadowing the old, and the Church walking like its Master among the people of Christendom. Were we prophets?"

"When that princely democrat, Archbishop Ireland, saw this letter of Cardinal Manning's he wrote to Baltimore: "The words are cheering, and to you who staked your name on the outcome of the problem, then rather obscure, they must have been very gratifying. You were a prophet. The people are the power, and the Church must be with the people. I wish all our own bishops understood this truth." (Leslie's *Life of Manning*, pp. 365-366.) We wish all our priests and Catholic laymen also understood this truth!

There is a great central historic truth outlined in this article, *viz.*, how plutocratic Protestant reformers stole political power and private property from the crown and the commons of England in the sixteenth century. This fact broke up the unity of Christendom. The international Catholicity of civilization ceased for four hundred years. An exaggerated nationalism was substituted for it. The Papacy and the

Church Universal were despised by the new plutocrats, who placed respectability above morality. The Catholic voice was silent in the land, indeed. Then, gradually, as the infant Church creeping forth from the catacombs, the pioneers of industrial democracy created a movement which made for international sympathy among the workers of Europe. The secular statesmen, who are mere puny politicians in reality, saw their doom written on the walls of trade union halls. The Church saw her time and her opportunity to speak out again to the teeming masses of the laboring poor. Von Ketteler, Manning, Leo XIII, Gibbons, Spalding, Ireland, Bourne, succeeding Popes, Pius X, Benedict XV, Pius XI, whole hierarchies, Germany, France, Spain, England, the United States, all declared for the rights of labor. Catholicism again was international. There are visions of Christendom rising up again before our eyes, and Leo and the Papacy are its prophets, and lesser prelates are again “suns of justice shining among the sons of men.”

A great chapter in the history of the world is just begun. The cleaving fissure in Christendom is closing in. The traditional plutocratic rulers of England have lost their hold on their spoils for the first time since they beheaded Charles I. The Catholic Church hails and blesses the new day. The fires of Christian industrial freedom are lit and who will extinguish them?

Discovering Our Social Ethic

The spiritual and economic results of the Reformation are drawing to a drab and ignominious close. The isolation of men's souls is ended. The domination by the few, the subjection of the many, the ruin of happiness is nearly over. The final threat of chaos is averted. England shall not be a servile state. America will imitate England at first. We shall be converted later to respect the intrinsic goodness and beauty of the Catholic ideal. Ben Tillet was right. “Leo XIII's program of social reform,” he said, “will test good Catholics much more effectively than any exhortation to religious worship.” The Anglicans discovered our liturgy and they gave us Newman and the Oxford movement and the Catholic revival. The Labor party instinctively discovered our social ethic and they are giving us Christendom, because Leo XIII was Pope of Rome and Cardinal Manning Archbishop of Westminster. What the Catholic Church always taught, the rank and file of ignorance will soon learn as soon as the mask of respectability is torn away from the ugly form of dishonesty, public and private.

It is hard to make mediaevalists of minds that worship this filth which they call progress. When their gods perish, they will die, too. The world, the Church, the nations will be good and happy again when these mean spirits are gone to their own place; because merrie England will make all the world merrie, as plutocratic

Protestant England disfigured the world with its universal capitalistic industrial mark – the progressive extension of its own despair.

Article LXII

The Final Result of the Catastrophe of the Religious Revolt of the Sixteenth Century

In our last article, we pointed out the religious significance truly most momentous underlying the progress of industrial democracy in our days – these decadent days of political democracy which the most blatant one hundred per cent American must now at last confess too many of his fellow super-patriots have betrayed for a fat and oily mess of pottage. No wonder these sworn defenders of the American Constitution fear the bogeyman of labor “radicalism,” the while they sell out the first line of defense of the American nation, the motive power of the United States battle fleets.

“Citizens, by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have in a common cause fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes. But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest.

“Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.” How little do these public servants of the American people seem to care for this last will and testament of the Father of their country! How do they cast obloquy and shame on that proud and noble name American, and make of it a byword and a reproach! Washington, in that last farewell address, saw, too, that combinations or associations of the fat and oily nature above described were “likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.” And it is no Russian gold that is corrupting our public servants either, but whole bags of plutocratic American dollars. Plutocracy is today in America corrupting political democracy.

It is very refreshing, then, in these degenerate days to see here and there signs and tokens of better things. “There is, indeed, a setting aside of the former commandment, because of the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: (for the law

brought nothing to perfection) but the bringing in of a better hope, by which we draw nigh to God.” (Heb. VII, 18-19.) Again, the philosophy of history, reading the full import of historic facts for the last four hundred years, convinced Belloc that if economic determinism has not determined the events of history, the events of Reformation history determined rigorously too many political and economic facts. Seeing intimately as he does the sum of all its historic antecedents, he points out the necessary consequences to a world that gloried in having taken the wrong path in a great turning point of history at the end of the Middle Age.

Significant Processes

“These processes filling the last three hundred years have been as follows: (1) A rapid extension of physical science and with it of every other form of acquaintance with demonstrable and measurable things. (2) The rise, chiefly in the new Protestant part of Europe (but spreading thence in part to the Catholic), of what we call today ‘capitalism,’ that is, the possession of the means of production by the few, and their exploitation of the many. (3) The corruption of the principle of authority until it was confused with mere force. (4) The general, though not universal, growth of total wealth with the growth of physical knowledge. (5) The ever widening effect of skepticism, which, whether masked under traditional forms or no, was from the beginning a spirit of complete negation and led at last to the questioning not only of any human institutions, but of the very forms of thought and of the mathematical truths. (6) With all these, of course, we have had a universal mark – the progressive extension of despair.” (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc, pp. 250-251.)

Major Consequences of the Reformation

The second of these processes is, of course, the one we are most interested in. It is the one Belloc calls the major consequence of the Reformation. It is “that phenomenon which we have come to call ‘capitalism,’ and which many, recognizing its universal evil, wrongly regard as the prime obstacle to right settlement of human society and to the solution of our now intolerable modern strains.” Dr. Och asks, in his work on the social question, “What constitutes capitalism?” and he gives the following answer:

(a) The exclusive subordination of production, in its organization as well as in its execution, to the interest of profit in money, and not to the interest of social benefit in (the volume of) commodities; (b) The paramount importance of the possession of wealth for the organizing of production, a condition which enables even the less competent (intellectually) to compete with and crush the financially

weaker undertaker; (c) The tendency to unscrupulous accumulation of profit regardless of ethical or humanitarian considerations; (d) The dependency of the laborer from wealth, the degradation of labor to a factor of production and to a factor of profit to the undertaker; (e) The consequent distribution of the yield of production in a manner by which the laborer receives a fixed wage while the owners of capital and the undertaker divide the entire remainder of the yield among themselves.” (*Social Politics and the Social Question*, Dr. Joseph Och, Rector, Pontifical College Josephinum, p. 14.)

The sad fact is now becoming clear that vast accumulations of wealth in the hands of unscrupulous men, or bodies of men, is liable to become a plutocracy, under and along with which political democracy is scarcely able to function in practice. Plutocracy may be defined, then, as the rule of wealth, or the political dominion of the rich, or the controlling power exercised on the government of a country by a class of rich men or a body of plutocrats. On this subject again we wish to let a great European mind discourse, as only as a graduate of Oxford can:

“What is called ‘capitalism’ arose directly in all its branches from the isolation of the soul. That isolation permitted an unrestricted competition. It gave to superior cunning and even to superior talent an unchecked career. It gave every license to greed. And on the other side it broke down the corporate bonds whereby men maintain themselves in an economic stability. Through it there arose in England, first, later throughout the more active Protestant nations, and later still in various degrees throughout the rest of Christendom, a system under which a few possessed the land and the machinery of production, and the many were gradually dispossessed. The many, thus dispossessed, could only exist upon doles meted out by the possessors, nor was human life a care to these. The possessors also mastered the state and all its organs – hence the great national debts which accompanied the system; hence even the financial hold of distant and alien men upon subject provinces of economic effort; hence the draining of wealth not only from increasingly dissatisfied subjects overseas, but from the individual producers of foreign independent states.

“The true conception of property disappears under such an arrangement, and you naturally get a demand for relief through the denial of the principle of ownership altogether. Here again, as in the matter of the irrational taboos and of skepticism, two apparently contradictory things have one root: Capitalism, and the ideal inhuman system (not realizable) called Socialism, both of which spring from one type of mind and both of which apply to one kind of diseased society.

“Against both, the pillar of reaction is peasant society and peasant society has proved throughout Europe largely co-ordinate with the remaining authority of the Catholic Church.” (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc, pp. 258-259.)

Capitalism Not the Prime Obstacle

And yet, as Belloc says rightly, “capitalism,” although correctly regarded as a universal evil, is not the prime obstacle to right settlement of human society and to the solution of our now intolerable modern strains. The thing from which “capitalism” springs, as an effect from a cause, is itself that prime obstacle. It is the isolation of the soul of nations torn from the civilization that was Christendom when the Faith was Europe and Europe was the Faith . . .

The peasant society of which he speaks is not a society composed of peasants only, but one in which modern industrial capitalism yields to agriculture, and agriculture is conducted by men who own in part or altogether their instruments of production and their share of the soil of their country, either through private ownership or customary tenure. Secure and well-divided, equitably – not necessarily equally – well-divided private property, will be the underlying conception of all the orders of the state. This is the doctrine of property and personal human rights that has the firm and unflinching support of the Catholic Church.

Only blind men now are unable to see how poorly things have gone since that bad original time when the Reformation was made respectable by reformed plutocrats who saw a good thing for them in the theology and philosophy of the reformers.

The Final Result

“So things have gone. We have reached, at last, as the final result of that catastrophe three hundred years ago, a state of society which cannot endure and a dissolution of standards, a melting of the spiritual framework, such that the body politic fails. Men everywhere feel that an attempt to continue down this endless and ever-darkening road is like the piling up of debt. We go further and further from a settlement. Our various forms of knowledge diverge more and more. Authority, the very principle of life, loses its meaning, and this awful edifice of civilization which we have inherited, and which is still our trust, trembles and threatens to crash down. It is clearly insecure. It may fall in any moment. We who still live may see the ruin. But ruin, when it comes, is not only a sudden, it is also a final thing.” (*Europe and the Faith*, Belloc, p. 260.)

Industrial democracy in England gives us a new hope. We pointed out how Catholic it was in its internationalism. The Reformation cut England off from Europe. It made it national and provincial in its outlook. The false patriotism of narrow nationalism was emphasized to deceive and to destroy the brotherhood of man. That brotherhood is now being slowly restored by the truly Christian charity and universal sympathy of the movement towards industrial democracy. The

Church welcomes the movement, as we have shown from the official documents defining her attitude. It has been blessed by the Popes of Rome and the hierarchies in communion with that ancient and apostolic See, whose center of unity is not the Throne of any plutocratic Ceasar, but that of the Fisherman.

Article LXIII

A Hard Saying Indeed

Now, then, we will presume for the nonce that we are living in England, and that we enjoy all the freedom of speech and of the press guaranteed to American citizens by the Constitution, and practiced by Englishmen without any Constitution. We will paraphrase a little sermon preached by an Englishman, a Roman Catholic and a trade unionist, which was printed in an English Catholic newspaper, the editor of which, *mirabile dictu*, is still ecclesiastically alive, and is considered one of the finest Christians, and one of the best informed men in England, on social and economic things from an ethical and moral point of view.

If we receive a stamped addressed envelope with a request for the name of the book from which this little homily is taken, we will inform the kind reader by return post. And, strange thing, we will state here also, presuming again on these ancient liberties enjoyed by every Englishman and found even in the Constitution of these great free United States of America, that we have it on the best evidence that no subscription was cancelled because the editor of this well-known English Catholic paper had the wild and imprudent audacity to print the following sermonette on “A Hard Saying:”

The Hardest Saying

“Surely, of all the hard sayings in the Gospel, the words at the end of the parable of the Good Samaritan are the hardest: ‘Go, and do thou in like manner’ – ‘Vade, et tu fac similiter.’

“The story itself is plain and simple; none of the parables of Christ is more familiar. The very phrase, ‘A good Samaritan,’ has passed into the language. And yet, is there anything harder for the average man than the concluding injunction, ‘Go, and do thou in like manner’? Its very directness leaves no loophole for misunderstanding or evasion. There is no suggestion here of a counsel of perfection. It is just an instruction in neighborly conduct, and an instruction exceedingly hard to obey.

“The Samaritan adopts a complete stranger, whom he finds in distress, and recognizing the wounded man as a neighbor, promptly provides him with hospitality; thereby inventing a home for the homeless, and for one person at least

solving the housing problem. ‘Go and do thou likewise,’ declares the Savior of the world!

“The clergy had passed the injured man by. Perhaps they blamed ‘the system,’ social and economic, that allows wounded persons to lie homeless and destitute by the roadside. Possibly they blamed the authorities, to whom they paid rates and taxes, for not keeping better order and suppressing highway robbery. In any case, the injured man was quite unknown to them. Certainly he was not a regular attendant at church, or they would have identified him. It is impossible to suppose that a good contributor or pew-holder found lying in the gutter would not be recognized and assisted. Whoever this unhappy man might be, it was not clear how he came to have fallen so low. Possibly he was drunk. Probably he had got into bad company. Why had he fallen among thieves? There was nothing in his appearance to suggest that he was a mere victim of circumstances.

“The clergy passed him by; they had their own work to do. The presbytery is not a lodging house or a casualty clearing station. Even our monasteries, convents and priories cannot extend hospitality to stray and unknown persons in distress, or find room for the vagrant fallen by the way. ‘To him that hath shall be give’ – hospitality must be limited to the respectable, to those neither destitute nor homeless, to the honored guest. Prudence and common sense approve the attitude of the priest and levite!

“And yet Christ, though He utters no word of reproach against the priest and levite, tells us not to imitate the clergy in this matter, but to do as the Samaritan did: The Samaritan – separatist and perhaps heretical.

“The Samaritan knew no more of the fallen man than did the priest and levite. He picks him up without enquiring into his character, ministers to his immediate necessities, takes him to the nearest hotel, and relieves his distress out of his own pocket. All this indiscriminate assistance is quite against the well-known principles of the Charity Organization Society. How could the Samaritan know that the injured man had not brought his misfortunes on himself by his own fault? And in spite of the C. O. S. and its kindred societies, there are the plain words of the Gospel: ‘Go, and do thou in like manner.’

“Surely the hardest of all hard sayings! We cannot take sick and destitute strangers, casually picked up by the wayside, and put them in our best spare bedroom. It is no less obviously impossible to provide even a temporary “shake down” in the sitting room. The servants wouldn’t stand it, and the people living next door would think it odd. Then, too, the sickness of the destitute man might be contagious for all we know. Besides, we haven’t always got room for our own particular friends. Hospitality may be all very well in certain old countries, but it is quite another matter in America and among people who break into high society after a lucky break in the family fortunes, or a slight lapse in the family conscience.

“As to personal service and providing food and a night’s lodging and medical attendance for a man picked up unconscious in the street – how can it be thought of? What are hospitals (at least city hospitals) and workhouses and infirmaries for? As Ebenezer Scrooge quite reasonably observed, ‘Are there no prisons? are not the union workhouses still in operation? I help to support the establishments I have mentioned – they cost enough; and those who are badly off must go there.’ Scrooge, it may be recalled, finished the conversation with the memorable words: ‘It’s enough for a man to understand his own business and not to interfere with other people’s. Mine occupies me constantly.’ What is the use?

American Ways

“It is so hard to Americanize some people. They never get quite accustomed to our American ways of looking at things. They may read all about our grand and glorious history – how we go in for civic purity above all things. You know, Europeans, after all, are unfit for democracy! One has to be a member of the front-porch best-mind cabinet before one understands all the free and easy ways of a great free country. It is not enough to read about Washington crossing the Delaware to make a foreigner a hundred per cent American. He should read all about the American government in Washington, D. C., also civics ought to be a part of every young girl’s early education because so many states of the union have anti-cigarette laws, and hip-pockets are forbidden by the constitution. The price of oil is determined by the iron law of supply and demand with a little thrown in to stock ranches in New Mexico, and give a thousand a day to progressive democrats who are presidential possibilities if they can be kept out of federal penitentiaries until the fourth of November on leap years.

“If the Samaritan had enjoyed the advantage of studying our many modern handbooks on social welfare, he could have learnt a better plan. He acted on impulse, doubtless a good impulse, but still impulse. A quiet and earnest examination of the methods of experienced social workers would have taught the Samaritan that system is needed in well-regulated charitable relief: *e. g.*, see how the great rich commonwealth of Minnesota and the Indian bureau at Washington looks after starving Indians! (Washington, D. C., is named after George Washington because he could never tell a lie, even before a senate oil investigation committee). Hasty and ill-considered action, though it may save a man’s life and put him on his feet again, is by no means desirable as a general rule. For all the Samaritan could tell, that wounded man might have fallen among thieves before and, though temporarily restored, there was nothing to show that he would not succumb to adversity again (succumb is used advisedly, the word “Fall” has gotten to be quite ambiguous). Again, there was no guarantee that, restored to health, the Samaritan’s protege

would leave the comfortable quarters at the inn to face the world and begin life anew. The Samaritan ran a great risk of being saddled with an undesirable acquaintance who declined to be shaken off.

“Statistics prove conclusively that haphazard help does not diminish the sum total of destitution. And then there are always the ‘deserving poor,’ cases carefully investigated, indexed and fully recorded, with all details as to their requirements properly noted down on approved forms. (Distance of tar-paper residence from nearest soft drink parlor, etc.) These ‘deserving poor’ surely have the prior claim? You know these terrible trade unions want these awful poor workers to be given a living wage. Where would there be any room for philanthropy left in this land of the free and the home of the brave, if every poor boy could not become president of the United States, provided his fair fame does not become splashed with oil? Admittedly the Samaritan acted on a good impulse, but he acted with the knowledge of the trained expert who ‘works among the poor;’ ‘Beatus qui intelligit super egenum et pauperum.’

“And still the finger of Christ points to the Samaritan, and bids us ‘Go, and do thou in like manner.’ History does not tell us whether the Samaritan was ever a boy scout or a member of the Y. M. C. A. Certainly he knew nothing of the primer of first aid. All he knew was that he must quickly and effectively succour in friendly fashion a neighbor who had fallen into the hands of thieves. And Christ says the Samaritan’s line is the right one, and the line for others to take – ‘Go, and do thou in like manner.’

“Does the injunction apply to Christians? Or was it only intended for the particular person addressed? May we, after all, relegate it to the counsels of perfection? (There is nothing to suggest that the Samaritan was a knight errant who went about looking for people in distress. Still less may we infer that the Samaritan objected to the road being cleared of robbers and made safe for travelers on the ground that so radical a reform would destroy the opportunities of charity.) ‘Go, and do thou in like manner.’ The words are the words of Christ, not airily to be dismissed as words without meaning, or without application in these enlightened latter days.

“Robbers still infest the paths of man, and daily their victims are still found faint and bruised by the road side.

“Vade, et tu fac similiter.”

“But what do the words mean today? and who will interpret this hard saying?” (See *Economics for Christians* by Joseph Clayton, X, “A Hard Saying.”)

Article LXIV

*The Oxford Movement and the Catholic Revival and Older Teaching are
All Different Phases of One Great Teaching*

It is a rather startling statement to say that Sir Walter Scott was the founder of the Oxford Movement. It is no less strange to say that the Oxford Movement was the cause of the Catholic Revival. The Catholic Revival movement is giving us Catholic social reform. Yet that is the proven thesis of sober, patient Catholic scholars. If there are those (and we know that there are a large number in every walk of life) who are talking and working in a contrary direction to the three-fold Catholic current mentioned above, we think the reason is due not so much to moral turpitude as it is to intellectual decrepitude. As a matter of fact, they are convinced that they are sane, sober, conservative and orthodox Catholics just in proportion as they vehemently oppose this Catholic trend toward a new Catholic Christendom, which is described very well and fairly adequately by the term mediaevalism. A hundred little rivulets join to swell this strong flowing stream, as it gains in power and momentum from day to day. As an example, we point with pride to the movement sponsored this year by the Arts and Letters department of the Guild of Catholic Women here in St. Paul in their “back to mediaevalism” study club.

Really, are Catholics so much to blame after all if they are found unconsciously working in anti-Catholic directions? Are they so much to blame for being ignorant and completely stupid with regard to those things of which they should be so honestly proud? Are they so much to be condemned if they have accepted “Reformation” standards instead of the Catholic ones cut down and discarded by the great, big, secular, pagan world about them in which they live and move and have their being? Is it not only the very natural thing to expect as long as they are so ignorant, as so many of them are now, of the great history and tradition which every Catholic should know something about, and every educated Catholic ought to know a great deal about – that great history and that glorious tradition of Christendom, which is, after all, the story of the supernatural influences of the Catholic Church on the social life of the world it blesses and saves?

The World and Those of the Household

When we hear the world outside the Church passing false judgment upon her past history, we accept it as the natural thing to expect, as long as the world refuses to be enlightened about these things. But what, when even those of the household lift up the heel against the Spouse of Christ and thank their stars that they are living in a world that is not dominated by the ideas that once dominated Christendom when a great and dominant Church dictated the moral law to civilized Europe,

when Europe was conterminous with the confines of civilization? That is the unkindest cut of all! And yet we hold that this foolish and absurd attitude of mind is not due primarily to moral decadence, though that is often present also, but rather to sheer intellectual ignorance. It is a good old scholastic maxim which says *nihil volitum quin praecognitum* ("ignorance is a poor standard of appreciation"). But is it not thus with regard to the Catholic thought of our day and especially of our country? Take the average Catholic, and what does he or she know of the teachings of his Church or of her past, her illustrious teachers of ancient, mediaeval or modern times? Above all, what do they know of the content of their teaching? Why, they are oblivious of their very existence as well as their teaching!

Now, we might go further and inquire into the causes of this condition of Catholic opinion round about us in America. How comes this attitude of mind in men and women, nearly all of whom in these days get a high school education, some of whom graduate from colleges, and not a few of whom were exposed at one time or another to the influence of philosophical or theological training in their youth? How comes it (and this is the most baffling phenomenon of all) that Catholics on the average think that Catholic doctrine, on the social and industrial question especially, is something to keep quiet about, if they know anything about it, or at least to be pared down to the point where a so-called prudent compromise with Reformation doctrines on the same subject make it acceptable to the general run of people whom the Catholic doctrine does not just exactly suit?

The story of the wealthy manufacturer who had accumulated an immense fortune illustrates the point we are making. Taken suddenly ill and rushed to a hospital, he was asked if he would like to see a priest, for though a splendid supporter of every worthy civic and religious cause, he had long since given up the practice of receiving the sacraments! Turning to the good Sister, he replied in weak accents: "Now that I am through, I suppose I must straighten things out." How, we ask finally, does a Catholic education justify itself at all, if it simply is a great struggle to keep up with the standards set by secular schools, avoiding anything particularly Catholic for fear of giving offense to the high and mighty in the social, financial or educational world of modern America, and thus losing a little patronage, sometimes real, but mostly prospective?

Why Are We Afraid?

In a word, why are we afraid to be as Catholic in our teaching of industrial and other ethics as, say, St. Jerome, or St. Augustine, or St. Thomas, or Leo XIII, or later popes, or Cardinal Manning, or Cardinal Bourne, or von Ketteler, or the American hierarchy's program of reconstruction? So-and-so does not approve of this teaching! And when one inquires who So-and-so is, what does he find? Some

upstart who never got any kind of education at all, secular or religious, is the great moral arbiter whose dictum is the court of last resort, for the Church and the popes and the hierarchies and the theologians are not recognized as authorities in, or the divinely appointed custodians of, the moral law any more, and they must not have the courage of any conviction; but, forsooth, they must bow abjectly down before the golden calf of some plutocratic idol, and silence or ignorance or both must be saddled on Catholic education even as Juno of old was saddled on the Teuceri.

It used not to be thus in the glorious past of which any honest Catholic should be justly proud. If we go back to Apostolic times, surely no Catholic would dare to say that the Apostles were at all timid in their preaching of the new religion. They were martyred, for the message they announced was as unpopular then to the pagan world as the same Apostolic message is now in our pagan surroundings. Would things have gone on gloriously for the Church supposing the early preachers were a little more temperate in their utterance, and more circumspect and prudent in their dealings with the powers that were then and are now ruling the destinies of states and nations? If we study the period of the great Greek and Latin Fathers, we find the same Apostolic intrepidity.

For sons of thine in truth's first hour,
Were tongues and weapons of His power,
Born of the Spirit's fiery shower,
Our fathers and our guides.

Teaching of the Fathers

What did these ecclesiastical giants say and do in their day? What sort of sermons did St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa, Clement of Alexandria, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose of Milan, St. Gregory the Great, St. Jerome, preach? We suppose it is even now lawful to quote a few passages from their discourses. "Opulence," says St. Jerome, "is always the result of theft committed, if not by the actual possessor, then by his predecessors." "Those who work for honor or riches in this world become the tabernacles of demons; this is significantly shown by the one word 'iniquity,' for every rich man is either unjust or the heir of an unjust one." St. John Chrysostom says: "Neither is anyone able to become rich without injustice." "How can riches be good? Therefore, do not call them good. Because you have them not, you think them good, and regard them with longing. Have a pure mind and right judgment, and then you will be good. Learn the things that are really good. What are these things? Virtue and beneficence; these are good, not riches."

St. Basil: "Hence, whoever loves his neighbour as himself, will possess no more than his neighbour. Yet it is plain that you have very much wealth. Whence these riches? Undoubtedly you have subordinated the relief and comfort of many to your own convenience. Therefore, the more you abound in riches, the more you have been wanting in charity. If you had loved your neighbour, you would have thought of sharing your money with others." St. Gregory of Nyssa: "But if one wishes to be absolute master of all, to obtain the entire inheritance, and to exclude his brothers from even a third or fifth part, he is not a brother, but a harsh tyrant, a rude savage; nay, more, an insatiable beast, that would devour the whole sweet banquet with his own gaping mouth." Clement of Alexandria: "I know that God has given us the use of goods, but only as far as is necessary; and He has determined that the use be common. It is absurd and disgraceful for one to live magnificently and luxuriously when so many are hungry." St. Augustine: "The superfluous things that remain are the necessities of others. The superfluities of the rich are the necessities of the poor. They who possess superfluities, possess the goods of others."

St. Ambrose of Milan: "How far, O rich, do you extend your senseless avarice? Do you intend to be the sole inhabitants of the Earth? Why do you drive out the fellow sharers of nature, and claim it all for yourselves? The Earth was made for all, rich and poor, in common. Why do you rich claim it as your exclusive right?" St. Gregory the Great: "They, therefore, wrongly think they are innocent who claim for themselves the common gift of God. When they do not give what they have received, they assist in the death of neighbors, because daily almost as many of the poor perish as have been deprived of means which the rich have kept to themselves. When we give necessities to the needy, we do not bestow upon them our goods; we return to them their own; we pay a debt of justice rather than fulfill a work of mercy." And again, that great saint of the helmeted prefaces Jerome: "All riches come from iniquity, and unless one has lost, another cannot gain. Hence that common opinion seems to me to be very true, 'the rich man is unjust, or the heir of an unjust one.' "

These great doctors and fathers of the Church Roman and Catholic had a right to speak in her name. They were preaching what had been given to them to preach, for they were near the time and the fervor of those first days when "the multitude of believers had but one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that aught of the things which he possessed were his own; but all things were common unto them."

Teaching of Later Times

The fathers and the theologians of later times have not changed this doctrine one iota. St. Thomas of Aquin wrote for his day as follows; "Concerning the point of

acquiring and disposing of goods, it is lawful for a man to hold them as his own; but as to the use of them, he should regard them as common, so that he may readily distribute them to relieve the necessities of others.” Oh, you will say, it is all right for these early times and these Middle Ages, but this is the twentieth century and this the United States of America! We will let Leo XIII speak for this age of ours and see if the good old doctrines of Catholicity have changed so as to square with the unbounded avarice of present-day plutocracy. “Therefore,” says Leo, “those whom fortune favors are warned that freedom from sorrow and abundance of earthly riches are no guarantee of the beatitude that shall never end, but rather the contrary; that the rich should tremble at the threatening of Jesus Christ – threatenings so strange in the mouth of our Lord, and that a most strict account must be given to the Supreme Judge for all that we possess. . . . But if the question be asked, How must one’s possessions be used? the Church replies without hesitation in the words of the same holy Doctor (St. Thomas): ‘Man should not consider his outward possessions as his own, but as common to all, so as to share them without difficulty when others are in need. Whence the apostle saith, “Command the rich of this world to give with ease, to communicate.” ’ ”

Leo himself, after thus putting the seal of the highest moral authority on Earth upon the teaching of Aquinas, goes on to state the same doctrine as was stated in the first centuries by the Greek and Latin fathers: “True, no one is commanded to distribute to others that which is required for his own necessities and those of his household; nor even to give away what is reasonably required to keep up becomingly his condition in life; for no one ought to live unbecomingly. But when necessity has been supplied and one’s position fairly considered, it is a duty to give to the indigent out of that which is over. [From] That which remaineth, give alms.” (*Rerum Novarum*.)

Holding Wealth in Trust

A great moral theologian, commenting on our modern views on these matters, has this to say: “Finally, in criticizing St. Jerome, it is well to bear in mind that his views on wealth were more correct than those that generally prevail today. He never forgot that the rich hold their wealth in trust. In common with the other fathers, he realized that the right of property, though exclusive, is not absolute. He kept in mind the great truth that a man’s right to the bounty of nature is limited by the like rights of his fellows. The right of property is in a large measure social, implying correlative social obligations. This is a truth that the modern world has largely forgotten; hence it is surprised when it finds St. Jerome using language that supposes such a doctrine.” (*Alleged Socialism of the Church Fathers*, Dr. Ryan, pp. 80-81.)

How strange these Catholic doctrines seem to our day, and above all how strange they sound in the ears of our theologically ignorant Catholic body! If we had not given the authors' names above, the average Catholic would think we were quoting extremists. But there they are, the Latin and Greek fathers, the great and renowned theologians, the early popes and the last ones, great bishops and great writers. When Christendom is restored again, we expect Catholics will not be so easily shocked by the honest directness of Catholic doctrines like these, which now appear so radical when heard for the first time; aye, so very un-American! In that day which may be nearer than we now dream, the great moral authorities on social and industrial ethics will not be some ignorant Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so, but the great Latin and Greek fathers, the renowned mediaeval theologians, the popes of Rome and the great and illustrious bishops which are set up in communion with that Apostolic See to rule the Church of God, to smite imperial heresy and cleanse the Altar's stain.

Article LXV

The Gospel and the World. The Moral Side of Industrial Activities

In our last article we deplored the sad fact that our Catholic body in America seems to be a stranger to the teaching of our great age-old divine and historic Church. Whether our silence to preach that great body of moral doctrine of which we are the guardians and the interpreters is due to ignorance, or a prudently assumed political-minded silence, we leave to wiser and more observing minds to decide. But the great ominous fact is there all the same, staring us tragically in the face. And the great pity of it is that we have a great deposit of doctrine of such tremendous importance for the country and the age in which we live, the while we are so timidly afraid to speak it out, for fear of giving offense perhaps to the great, big, pagan world of today and to those milk-and-water Catholics who are only nominally of the fold, but in reality are votaries of the world and of Mammon – that pride of life which makes men and women impervious to every motion of God's grace; that great world for which Christ refused even to pray. "I pray for them: I pray not for the world."

Why Are We Afraid?

But we, why are we so timid, and so afraid of that wicked world – we who have received the Paraclete, that He may abide with us forever, "the Spirit of truth, Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him not, nor knoweth Him: but you shall know Him; because He shall abide with you, and shall be in you." "You are my friends if you do the things that I command you." "But I have chosen you;

and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit shall remain.” And why should we fear the haughty hate of the world? Why should we wish to make a compromise with it? “If the world hate you, know that it hath hated Me before you. If you had been of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember my word that I said to you: The servant is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept My word, they will keep yours also.”

Where is our majestic gesture of scorn and contempt for the flattering ways of devious worldly people in the fold or outside it? Where is that magnificent spirit of prophecy which should be manifest in all our words and works justifying all the ways of God to man – that prophetic Paraclete who was promised to us and whom we have received by the imposition of hands in an awful moment? “But if I go, I will send Him to you, and when He is come, He will convince the world of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. Of sin: because they believed not in Me. And of justice: because I go to the Father; and you shall see Me no longer. And of judgment: because the prince of this world is already judged. I have yet many things to say to you: but you cannot bear them now.” (John, chs. XIV, XV, XVI.)

The Gospel and the World

When shall we be able to bear this gospel message? The world will never take kindly to it. It must be converted from its wicked ways in order to live, so that it could bear to hear the gospel truths proclaimed for its salvation. Where is our great Catholic press? What is its effect, on the non-Catholic world of America? Alas! at present it is often but a pious advertising medium for school supplies, and church furniture very often of the soda fountain variety, with a local news item or two thrown in to give the due religious flavor, by announcing a parish whist party, a mah jong game for the Mothers’ Club, or an athletic bout under the auspices of the Young Ladies’ Sodality! Is that stuff to be forever the sum total of the liturgical, artistic, philosophical, scientific, educative, musical, economic, social and industrial activity of the Catholic Church in the United States of America? Is this recrudescence of vulgarity to be our only contribution to the world-wide resurgence of Catholicism, to this second spring of mediaevalism whose breath ought to be as religiously intoxicating to our souls as the first gentle zephyrs that break the hide-bound winter of the Earth, are physically exhilarating to the wasted body? As we look around us today, we seem to hear in fancy some great ecclesiastical leader, archangel-like, sounding the trumpet-call to the American Church, “Awake, arise, or be forever dead!”

You tell us that Christianity has not failed. Why, there are desert stretches of the Earth where Christian teaching has failed and died out. Where are those once-glorious Churches of antiquity today? The great universities are ours no more. The renowned sees of our most illustrious and saintly bishops are to be found only as titular names *in partibus infidelium*. How do we expect to build up a great living dominant Church within the confines of this great land, by sitting supinely down waiting for something to happen that will disturb our peaceful, placid dreams? “This is a world of conflict, and of vicissitude amid the conflict. The Church is ever militant; sometimes she gains, sometimes she loses; and more often she is at once gaining and losing in different parts of her territory. What is ecclesiastical history but a record of the ever-doubtful fortune of the battle, though its issue is not doubtful? Scarcely are we singing *Te Deum*, when we have to turn to our *Misereres*; scarcely are we in peace, when we are in persecution; scarcely have we gained a triumph, when we are visited by a scandal.” (Newman, *Historical Sketches*, Vol. II, introduction.)

Understanding the Genius of the Catholic Church

We shall never have a great Church until Catholics are taught to think imperially. At present our educational system does not tend in this direction. That preparation does not in any way prepare the soul for the eternal joys of Heaven that has as its main motive the fitting of the pupil for the dreary jobs of Earth. Our souls are cribbed and cabined and confined intellectually, because we have failed to understand the genius of the Catholic Church, in proportion as we have cut our lives adrift from her grand tradition. We do not appreciate the treasures that are ours because we know them not. We concentrate on the small, and little, and mean, and trivial things, and neglect the great big issues of the battle because we will not mount the heights from which we could command a long and sweeping perspective of the field and theater of war.

We fail, not because we are Catholic, but because we are not. We are insignificant, not because we are Catholic, but because we are not. We have failed so far to have any deep or lasting influence on the swift-flowing current of American life, not because we are Catholic, but because we are not. We shall never have any influence on it as long as we are only half-and-half. The spirit that keeps us so, we repeat again, is not the Catholic spirit. It is a spirit that the Catholic body is imbibing from without. It is the spirit of the Reformation world in which we are living that is breaking down our Catholic fibre.

This is no idle fancy of our creation. As we have stated again and again, it is the sober conclusion of patient, scholarly, observing minds. “According to the Abbé Lugan, the instruction in our churches and schools, and particularly in our books of

devotion, the last three centuries, dealt almost entirely with personal redemption and the salvation of the soul. The popular instruction did not portray the Gospel as providing light and guidance for social relations. Many of the spiritual writers exhibited tendencies that were too individualistic. While the ethical and Christian aspect of social and economic life was, indeed, set forth in our manuals of philosophy and theology, this teaching was not accessible to the masses.

The Moral Side of Industrial Activities

“That there is considerable truth in this judgment, will be admitted by all Catholic scholars. Only since the appearance of the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, ‘On the Condition of Labor,’ has our practical teaching included anything like general attention to the moral side of industrial activities, to the ethical aspects of wages, profits, capital and labor. The reasons for this neglect of our rich heritage of social teaching cannot be adequately described in this place. Let it suffice to point out that they are to be found mainly in the Protestant Reformation. That disastrous event compelled Catholic teachers to concentrate most of their energies upon apologetics, upon the task, or defending the faith; and it disseminated a pernicious and insidious individualism whose influence has not been entirely restricted to Protestants.” (Dr. John A. Ryan, *The Catholic Charities Review*, February, 1924, Abbé Lukan quoted from *L’Enseignement Sociale de Jesus*, I, pages 169-188.)

And as we stated more than once, what passes current for fine Catholic doctrine, shouted from pulpit and platform *ad nauseam*, is often only the distilled quintessence of Reformation poison in matters doctrinal. “The true source of modern nationalism, that it sometimes failed to lay sufficient emphasis upon the traditional Catholic doctrine of international obligations – that same internationalism which knows neither bond nor free, neither Jew nor Gentile.” Dr. Ryan very accurately puts his finger on the sore spot of the whole trouble when he states that this sort of doctrine is propagated in the name of the Church by teachers who are not sufficiently acquainted with her doctrines to speak in her name. We have tried to drive this point home again and again. Let us listen to Dr. Ryan: “Whatever deficiencies may be found in the teaching of international charity in Europe prior to the war, are attributable to the subordinate teachers.” We would say, to the jitney theologian who usurps the chair of Moses, and in a low stage of civilization palms himself off as a master in Israel: “On the other hand, large concessions were made by religious teachers to a conception of patriotism which is essentially pagan. . . . With shame and regret we are compelled, nevertheless, to confess that we have not kept ourselves unspotted from the Jingoism and un-Christian nationalism which is not the least detestable element in the War’s miserable heritage.” (Dr. John A. Ryan, *Catholic Charities Review*, February, 1924.)

What will cure all this cheap and blatant propaganda against Catholic truth and educated decency? Only a liberal Catholic university education, by which leaders will be bred who will have the courage of Catholic convictions, and who will not be afraid to preach them to modern America, can save us from this recrudescence of cheap educational vulgarity which too often now is substituted for scholarship. But it must be real university education, not that monstrosity which produces, after years of college education, only the Chautauqua mind. The university that will turn out such men must be a Catholic university, something like the ideal delineated for us by John Henry Cardinal Newman: "A university is a place of concourse, whither students come from every quarter for every kind of knowledge. You cannot have the best of every kind everywhere; you must go to some great city or emporium for it. There you have all the choicest productions of nature and art all together, which you find each in its own separate place elsewhere. All the riches of the land, and of the Earth, are carried up thither; there are the best markets, and there the best workmen. It is the center of trade, the supreme court of fashion, the umpire of rival talents, and the standard of things rare and precious. It is the place for seeing galleries of first-rate pictures, and for hearing wonderful voices and performers of transcendent skill. It is the place for great preachers, great orators, great nobles, great statesmen. In the nature of things, greatness and unity go together; excellence requires a center. And such, for the third or fourth time, is a university; I hope I do not weary out the reader by repeating it. It is the place to which a thousand schools make contributions; in which the intellect may safely range and speculate, sure to find its equal in some antagonistic activity, and its judge in the tribunal of truth. It is a place where inquiry is pushed forward, and discoveries verified and perfected, and rashness rendered innocuous, and error exposed, by the collision of mind with mind, and knowledge with knowledge. It is a place where the professor becomes eloquent, and is a missionary and a preacher, displaying his science in its most complete and most winning form, pouring it forth with the zeal of enthusiasm, and lighting up his own love of it in the breasts of his hearers. It is the place where the catechist makes good his ground as he goes, treading in the truth day by day into the ready memory, and wedging and tightening it into the expanding reason. It is a place which wins the admiration of the young by its celebrity, kindles the affections of the middle-aged by its beauty, and rivets the fidelity of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of the faith, an alma mater of the rising generation. It is this and a great deal more, and demands a somewhat better head and hand than mine to describe it well." ("What Is a University?" John Henry Newman, *Historical Sketches*, Vol. III, pages 15-16.)

Christendom gave birth to such institutions once before. Will these halcyon days ever come back to this ignorantly troubled world again? Would we be worthy of them?

Article LXVI

Made in Germany, Then and Now

It used to be very fashionable a few years ago when writing or speaking of any important progressive, forward-looking movement, either in the social, industrial or educational world, to tell just what was being done in Germany. That vogue has been considered, well, not so very correct for now seven or eight years back. There is no good reason, as far as we can see, why our attitude should change so very much without any corresponding objective causes for justifying the changed attitude. One good reason that accounts for this *volte-face* is that for the most part the individual speaker or writer has not got the moral courage to be different from the mob. It may be that the European war had something to do with this intellectual sommersault, though why that should be the case with men or women who judge things dispassionately is not easy to see either.

Going to School to Germany

As we said, it was the thing before the war to boast of going to school to Germany. There was good reason for that boast. And looking back now that it is all over, over there, we will go back again to an old custom that was once very popular, and shall put before our readers a few of the things done in Germany, during the last half century or more, for the advancement of the Catholic cause and in the interests of social and industrial reform.

In Rome we had a Leo XIII, in England a Cardinal Manning, in America a Cardinal Gibbons. In Germany we had the great episcopal precursor of them all, William Emmanuel Baron von Ketteler, Bishop of Mainz and of the workingman. He was a great democrat, but like all democrats who have enough sense of decency not to be demagogues also, he was often vigorously accused of fostering despotism.

“We joyfully confess,” wrote Bishop Ketteler in answer to a slur of a Freemasonic journal that his audience on a certain occasion was composed mainly of laboring men, “that every dock-hand, every day-laborer, every peasant is of as much moment to us as any prince or king, and that we place human dignity far above all class distinctions. We feel nothing but inexpressible pity for those who esteem the wealthy manufacturer higher than the poor farmhand.” In this simon-

pure democracy of America, where we are all at least born equal and very soon forget it, this should be sufficient introduction to the “Bishop of the Workingman.”

Like every great bishop of every age, von Ketteler was speaking not for himself alone but for all the Church which still continues to fulfill Christ’s mission upon Earth: “And the poor have the Gospel preached to them.” But Bishop Ketteler’s voice was heard by all Germany, high and low. The lowliest worker listened and was glad, and the Iron Chancellor was obliged to listen and was maddened by many of his utterances. “Consult the writings of the Bishop of Mainz,” said Bismarck, misinterpreting their obvious meaning and sense in his Kulturkampf speech, as has often been done before and since by lesser haters of justice and fair dealing than Bismarck, “they are cleverly written, pleasant to read and in everyone’s hands.”

A Catholic Pioneer in the Modern Industrial Field

“In the realm of industrial relations, to which we are here confining ourselves, the name of Bishop William Emmanuel von Ketteler must ever stand recorded as that of the pioneer of modern Catholic action in the industrial field” (Father Joseph Husslein, S. J.). “He was my great precursor in the labor cause,” says Leo XIII of him. “You wield a good pen, my son,” the aged Pope Pius IX said to him on his last visit to Rome, shortly before his death. And Popes of Rome wrote this of the man who joyfully boasted, “that every dock-hand, every day-laborer, every peasant is of as much moment to us as any prince or king, and that we place human dignity far above all class distinctions. We feel nothing but inexpressible pity for those who esteem the wealthy manufacturer higher than the poor farmhand.”

What an utter lack of prudence on the part of Bishop Ketteler and of the two Popes! His ringing speech, as a priest beside the grave of two deputies of the Frankfurt parliament who had been brutally murdered for their free public utterances in the fateful year of 1848, we will quote in full. We would remind our timid and cautiously ambitious brothers that Father Ketteler was rewarded for his imprudent recklessness two years later, by being elevated to the See of St. Boniface – the Bishopric of Mainz. The deputies were Prince Lichnowsky and General Auerswald, who were shot down by the infuriated mob. His words are as appropriate to our present conditions as they were for those of his audience thrilled and awed by his living eloquence:

“Who, I ask, are the murderers of our friends? Is it, indeed, they who have riddled their bodies with bullets? No, it is not they. It is the thoughts that bring forth good and wicked deeds on Earth – and the thoughts that have brought forth these deeds are not the thoughts of our people. My lot is cast with the people; I know it in its pains and in its sorrows. I have devoted my whole life to the service

of the people, and the more I have learned to know them, the more also I have learned to love them. No, I repeat, it is not our noble, honest German people from whom this horrible deed has gone forth. The murderers are the men who sneer at Christ, Christianity and the Church before the people; who try to pluck the blessed message of redemption out of the hearts of the people; who raise rebellion, revolution, to the dignity of a principle; who tell the people that it is not their duty to govern their passions, to subject their actions to the higher law of virtue. The murderers are the men who set themselves up as the lying idols of the people, in order that these may fall down and adore them.

The Cry for Universal Peace

“On all sides I hear the cry for universal peace – and whose soul would not joyfully join in the cry? – and I see men ever more and more divided against themselves, the father against the son, the brother against the sister, the friend against the friend; I hear the cry for equality among men, an equality which the message of salvation has been teaching for thousands of years, and I see man striving frantically to raise himself above his fellowman; I hear the beautiful, the sublime cry for brotherhood and love, a cry borne down to us from Heaven, and I see hatred and calumny and lying running riot among men; I hear the cry to hold out a helping hand to our poor suffering brother – and who, if he has not plucked out both his eyes, can deny that his need is great, and who that has not torn his heart out of his bosom, will not join with all his soul in this cry for help? – and I see avarice and covetousness increase, and pleasure-seeking grow more and more. I see men who call themselves ‘friends of the people’ adding to the general distress, undermining the love for work, and setting their poor deluded brother at the pockets of his fellow-man, keeping their own money-bags tightly sealed the while; I hear the cry for liberty, and before me I see men murdered for having dared to utter an independent word; I hear the cry for humanity, and I see a brutality which fills me with horror.

“O yes, I believe in the truth of all these sublime ideas that are stirring the world to its depths today; in my opinion, not one is too high for mankind; I believe it is the duty of man to realize them all, and I love the age in which we live for its mighty wrestling, however far it is from attaining them. But there is only one means of realizing these sublime ideals – return to Him who brought them into the world, to the Son of God, Jesus Christ. Christ proclaimed those very doctrines which men, who have turned their backs on Him and deride Him, are now passing off as their own inventions; but He not only preached them – He practiced them in His life, and showed us the only way to make them a part and parcel of our own lives. He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life; outside of Him is error, and lying,

and death. Through Him mankind can do all things, even the highest, the most ideal; without Him it can do nothing. With Him, in the Truth which He taught, on the Way which He pointed out, we can make a Paradise of Earth, we can wipe away the tears from the eyes of our poor suffering brother, we can establish the reign of love, of harmony and fraternity, of true humanity; we can – I say it from the deepest conviction of my soul – we can establish community of goods and everlasting peace, and at the same time live under the freest political institutions; without Him we shall perish disgracefully, miserably, the laughing-stock of succeeding generations. This is the solemn truth that speaks to us out of these graves; the history of the world bears it out. May we take it to heart.” (*Predigten*, II, pp. 107, f. f.)

Bishop von Ketteler

Wilhelm Emmanuel Baron von Ketteler, Bishop of Mainz, lived a life that reads like romance. A stormy giant of a university student, he joins the civil service, quits it in disgust, and becomes the parish priest of an obscure village where he makes the beds of his typhus-stricken parishioners and wins the hearts of all the children. Forced into a bishopric, he drills his diocese with a rod of iron and loves the poor with the tenderness of a woman. He is a man of action rather than a student; yet he pours out a flood of books and pamphlets which at once become classics. His enterprise in social reform wins the approval of the most conservative among his brother-bishops, and likewise of that arch-Socialist, Ferdinand Lassalle. Magnificent in presence, strong voiced, domineering, he is as simple as a child and as humble as a Franciscan. He is no visionary, but a man of shrewd practical sense, living through some of the darkest days which the Church in Germany has ever witnessed. Yet he remained an optimist to the last.

Article LXVII

Germany Worshipped in England and America Before the Great War

In recounting the things accomplished by von Ketteler for the Germany of his day, we cannot but notice the praise lavished on Germany by English and American writers prior to the Great War. In the preface to a little work on *Catholic Social Work in Germany*, by Father Plater, S. J., by the Bishop of Salford, written in 1909, just five years before England declared war on the German empire, we find the typical encomiums. They are so apropos to the subject in hand that we cannot refrain from quoting his Lordship of Salford; and would that his views had prevailed, for how different would be the condition of Europe today if they had,

and especially the condition of the two leading Anglo-Saxon Nordic peoples, the Germans, and the English.

Speaking of the various ententes that were being broached at the time, the Bishop writes: "Certainly, insofar as such ententes lead to better understanding and more friendly relations between the various nations of the civilized world, and are therefore a guarantee of abiding peace, they deserve the warm support of every good citizen and in a particular manner of every Christian who professes himself by his very name to be a follower of the Prince of Peace.

Views on Ententes

"But I have long felt that there is one entente which is of more value to us than others, not merely from political motives, but from the point of view of our own moral and religious advantage: I refer to that with Germany. For I believe that we have much that is good to learn from the German people: Their strong religious instincts, their inborn respect for order and authority, their earnestness and seriousness of character and aim, their love of domestic life, their devotion to the 'Fatherland' – all these are precious traits of national character that we in this country cannot but derive profit from by knowing and imitating.

"It is especially to us Catholics that a more intimate acquaintance with Germany, and particularly with German Catholicism, must be of the greatest value. The sterling worth of this German Catholicism is well known all over the Church. Those of us who have seen it in its home have long been filled with that conviction. Tried in the fire of the Kulturkampf, German Catholicism has emerged the sterling, solid, practical progressive organization that we all admire.

"But it is above all in the domain of social activity and social reform that Catholic Germany has set us a model worthy of all our attention and emulation. Therein we see applied Christianity at its best." (Louis Charles, Bishop of Salford, August, 1909.)

Social reform was only one phase of German Catholic activity that deserves to be known and praised as it so well merits. The German Church in the nineteenth century grappled with and successfully solved two other national problems which have their counterpart to some extent in this country also. In the first place, there was a very pronounced state absolutism which, for a while, threatened to leave no room at all for Catholicism. Then there was an appalling apathy among the wealthier Catholics of the professional and industrial classes. These twin evils had to be fought and overcome before the Church could make much headway against Socialism. The Church could not hope with any success to protest against the evils of Socialism, as long as the more prosperous Catholics were helping to perpetuate

the abuses of the capitalistic system, which were driving the workingmen of Germany to welcome the gospel of Socialism.

These dangers, while threatening to destroy the proper influence of the Catholic Church, were naturally also threatening in a very true sense the life of the nation, because the powers of the Catholic Church and the progress and force of her influence directly affect the highest interests of national well-being. It seemed impossible for a time that the Church should emerge victorious from the struggle, but she did and her victory redounded undoubtedly to the best interests of the whole German empire. For as Father Plater so succinctly puts it, "A Catholic is not the mere partisan of a creed. His cause is also the cause of civilization in the best sense of the word."

Catholic Action in Germany

By breaking down state absolutism in Germany, Catholic leaders were vindicating the cause of civil liberty. In improving the condition of the working classes, organizing their vast forces for good or evil, and turning them in the right direction, they prevented the evils that would necessarily follow on the old-fashioned socialistic regime. Even modern Socialists admit today that the Catholic Church was the one obstacle to a movement which everybody now admits would have produced utter chaos. But we would remind reactionary and Bourbon mentalities that abuse of Socialism was not the weapon German Catholic leaders used to defeat its nefarious program. Rather it was their attack on the apathy of Catholics in positions of affluence and influence that produced the new spirit, and gave us so many illustrious pioneers in social reform, the patriotic, as well as religious and moral, value of whose work is now admitted on all sides. We cannot insist too much on this point. It is a cardinal principle of all reform. Where is the use of heaping diatribes of abuse in season and out of season on certain evils, social or religious, if the same people are aiders and abettors of the direct, efficacious and sometimes theologically culpable causes of these so violently denounced evils?

The Catholic Revival

Of course, there were present in the Germany of Bishop von Ketteler many movements besides the social reform one that he inaugurated, all of which helped on the Catholic revival of later years. Just as in England the Oxford movement, and the influx into the old Catholic body of distinguished, holy and learned men from the Anglican communion, gave a great forward impetus to the English Catholic revival; so in Germany, also, we had a band of writers and leaders who had sown

the good seed that sprung up everywhere later, and produced a German Catholic revival that made the Catholic Church a great power in the country, just because the Church there, at least prior to the Great war, was living a fully Catholic healthy life. There were workers in the field like Frederic Schlegel, Wessenberg, Clement Brentano, Schlosser, Königsfeld, Simrock, Diepenbrock, von Schenk, von Eichendorf, Jean Rousseau, Guido Görres, Count Pocci, Vogt, Beda Weber, Zingerle, Pyrker, Christopher Schmid, Morel, Father Zeil, Pape, Countess Ida Hahn-Hahn, to name only the more important of them. Besides these there was a great literary and scientific activity largely due to the Catholic periodical literature of Germany, to which the first powerful impulse was given by Frederic Schlegel.

These periodicals were Catholic, but they exercised, because of their intrinsic merit and worth, a wide and deep influence on Catholics and Protestants alike. Take, for example, *The Theological Quarterly of Tübingen*, founded in 1819, which under the editorial management of Möhler gave ample proof that Catholicity, founded on the unchangeable principles of truth, could hold its own, not only in the practical affairs of life, but against the most searching investigations of science. Then there was *The Catholic*, founded in 1821, which, loyal to its grand motto, *Christianus mihi nomen, Catholicus cognomen*, stirred up the consciences of Catholics and taught them to set a proper value upon their dignity, at a season like the present one in America, when the spirit of indifference was more generally diffused than in any former age; when Catholic doctrine seemed fading or already effaced from the minds of men; and when the negations of Protestantism and rationalistic philosophy appeared to have become everywhere triumphant.

Since the middle of the nineteenth century, *The Catholic*, under the editorial management of Heinrich and Moufang, has been exclusively devoted to Catholic science and ecclesiastical life, its specialty being mediaeval theology. There are dozens of other periodicals and weeklies and dailies specially devoted to the interests of the Church and Catholic truth. To name them would be too much for the scope of this article. We would only again remind the reader that a comparison of this Catholic effort and achievement of the Church in Germany during the nineteenth century is very odious, when made with our efforts and achievements in this part of the vineyard, which we like to refer to on occasions as the great hope of the Catholic Church in the world today! We do not name the single or collective monumental and scholarly works of individual Catholic savants, because even their very names are unknown to the average American Catholic, names that are household words in Catholic Europe today.

A Digression

This, of course, is a little digression from our main topic, which is the social and industrial aspect of the great revival of Catholic life in Germany. Still, it is well to keep in mind that a general revival of education in several fields is necessary before any outstanding results can be achieved in any one of them. This was the soil, then, in which von Ketteler began to create the materials for a great social and industrial reaction to the pagan principles which held the field before his time and which were accepted by Catholics, as by others, in their ignorance. Created they were, though, and that largely through the influence of one lone Catholic Bishop, William Emmanuel Baron von Ketteler, of the See of St. Boniface and the Bishopric of Mainz.

A Valiant Precursor

The fruits of his labors are known to all today. Popes of Rome, and hierarchies throughout the world, look up to him now as their great precursor. The magnificent system of social works which he founded or inspired challenges the admiration of the world today. Individual Catholics before his time were giving their attention to the social question, but they were unable to arouse general interest in the Catholic or political body of the country. The forces were there, but they were dormant and latent. Only a genius could call them forth, such a one as appears now and then like a comet, and this genius was Bishop Ketteler. He was the man whose like, says the eminent historian of the German people, Janssen, appears only once in a thousand years. He was the man whose personality he stamped forever on the organization of Catholic Germany. He was the man who gave the famous Centre party their social program. He was the man who initiated movements which have spread over half the world. He was the single lone figure which will stand for all time as the herald of a new phase in the beneficent activity of the Catholic Church, a beneficent activity of a great and dominant Church which in these latter days is so misunderstood by the average Catholic around us, that even the very teaching and phrases of Leo XIII, who was not too proud to call himself a pupil of von Ketteler, are considered too radical to be even mentioned among us, lest we be suspected of being a degree or two less patriotic than the *homo boobiens*, who is always safe enough in his social and industrial ethical teaching to graduate before the intellectual *canaille* to whom he panders as 100% American.

Article LXVIII

Von Ketteler the Bishop of the Workingman, Leo's Precursor

Bishop Ketteler, like many other illustrious German Catholics, was a Westphalian by birth – a true son of the “red earth,” impetuous, fearless, chivalrous. “His Jesuit masters at Brieg, at Valais, found him something of a young pickle – an honest and imperious little rascal, of the type in which your true schoolmaster delights. His undergraduate days at Göttingen were even stormier. We hear of ‘raggings’ and of a duel which proved more serious than is usual in such academic encounters.” When twenty-three years old, he accepted a governmental post at Münster, but four years later, in 1837, when Clemens Augustus, Archbishop of Cologne, was arrested for refusing to obey the government and imprisoned in the fortress of Minden, Ketteler resigned in a fury. “One must have a very strong digestive organ not to die with rage at the sight of the atrocities,” he wrote to his sister Sophie. His impetuous nature led to several stormy and highly unconventional manifestations even in his episcopal palace in later years. His studies for the priesthood were carried on under such able teachers as Görres, Döllinger and Phillips at Munich. As a priest, he immediately set to work to accomplish those things in the quiet little village of Hopsten, which afterwards made the great bishop of Mainz world famous. The country vicar, by his heroic conduct during an epidemic, constituted himself the father of the whole countryside. A few years later, the district, in spite of its bitter Protestant majority, elected Father Ketteler almost unanimously as its representative in the parliament of Frankfurt.

Pleading for Liberty for the Church

He was one of six hundred deputies in a most heterogeneous body of lawmakers. There were the princes of royal blood, Bishops of the Church, and of the churches, a sprinkling of university dons, forty priests, Döllinger, and many more who made Prince Lichnowsky describe their meetings as “stinking of *canaille*.” Ketteler at once struck the note which he was to sound with such effect later on. He pleaded with all his energy for the liberty of the Catholic Church and freedom for Catholic teaching, liberty of worship and freedom of speech in the Catholic pulpit and in the Catholic press. The one-hundred-percenters, the oily democrats of his day looked at him askance, and accused him of being too aristocratic in his leanings. His aristocratic-minded brethren regarded him as a dangerous radical. The reason was, of course, that von Ketteler was an honest and intelligent man, who had no use for mere politics in public or in private life, who scorned to stoop to recognized

political methods of dubious rectitude in gaining ends, who never shrank from administering a well-earned rebuke to patriotic and pompous humbugs in both parties.

A few days after he delivered the funeral oration quoted further back, we find him taking a prominent part in the first of these great annual Catholic congresses which have worked such wonders in educating the German Catholic body and binding it together into a strong, enlightened and determined unit, which once forced the capitulation of even a Bismarck a few years after his proud No Canossa boast. He took for his theme once again the subject that was so dear to him, "The Liberty of the Church and the Social Question." He saw plainly in 1848 what many obscurantist American Catholics have failed to see even in 1924, that the Church, or the churchman whose soul is not free to speak out her doctrines on the social question, is in reality a slave and a hireling.

"Religion needs freedom. Yes, but freedom needs religion. If the people do not come back to religion, they cannot bear freedom. But, we ask, how can freedom come back to a Church that is itself afraid to be free? Catholics must themselves take the social question in hand. Social questions were more actual than political questions." Father Plater, S. J., in commenting on this first great speech of Von Ketteler, has this to say: "This was a hard saying at Mainz in 1848. Today, in England, it should be a truism. Yet how many Catholics appear to realize it?" These days were pre-war days in England. It certainly is a truism in Great Britain today. But what about these great United States of America before and during and after the Great War? When will the day dawn on us, when will the day-star arise in our hearts, which will make us see the importance of important things, and the mean smallness of trifling, whether lay or ecclesiastical?

Dawn of a New Day

Needless to say, von Ketteler's speech made a profound impression. It was, of course, the keynote of the whole congress. It was a weighty utterance delivered by a man of determined convictions. Catholics were aroused as never before since Reformation days. They felt that a new horizon was opening out before them. They began to lift up their heads and their hearts. Beda Weber has described in glowing imagery, "the tall, strong figure of the priest dominating the great assembly, and the fearless energy and speech which promised to rebuild the Catholic Church in Germany more speedily and more magnificently than human art could restore the great Cathedral of Cologne. And at the banquet which followed, Ketteler, while proposing in touching terms the health of 'the poor of the German people,' begged that such a toast might not be an empty mockery, but that Catholics would co-

operate in heart and hand for the welfare of the poor” (*Catholic Social Work in Germany*, Charles D. Plater, S. J., M. A. Oxon.)

We cannot refrain from quoting an important passage from this speech: “One task for the immediate future I urge upon you once more: I mean the task of bringing religion to bear upon social questions. The most difficult question, and one which has not yet been solved by any legislation, or by any constitution, is the social question. I can say in all sincerity that the difficulty, the magnitude, the urgency of the task fill me with the greatest joy. I do not rejoice at poverty; I sympathize with it from the bottom of my heart. Nor do I rejoice at the misery of my brethren. No, but I rejoice because it will now inevitably be made clear which Church possesses the power of divine truth. It will be seen that the final solution of the social question rests mainly with the Catholic Church. The state has not the power to solve it, whatever resolutions it may pass. A similar thought has been expressed by a Protestant minister in the Church of St. Paul (*i. e.*, at the parliament of Frankfurt which was held in the Church of St. Paul). The fight between Protestant and Catholic will forthwith subside in the domain of dogma; but it will arise in the domain of the social problem.”

A Laborious Life in the Cause of Labor

This was the dominant note of Ketteler’s message to be delivered in season and out of season during the next thirty years of his laborious life spent in the cause of the working men and women of the world until his death in 1877, the year before Leo XIII ascended the throne of the Fisherman to carry on the great work so ably begun by von Ketteler, and which prompted the Pope of the workingman to hail the Bishop of Mainz as his precursor in the preaching of his social and industrial gospel. Like every Christian man who has an intelligent grasp on Catholic principles, and an acquaintance with the traditional role played by the Catholic Church in the formation of Christendom, Ketteler’s whole soul revolted at the doctrine of the current political economy.

“He saw that the increasing application of machinery was leading to an exploitation of the working classes which the Catholic school, following St. Thomas Aquinas, must brand as unnatural and immoral. The true notion of the rights and duties of property must be impressed on men’s minds. The true notion of liberty must be vindicated, and the banner of Catholic social reform unfurled.” (Plater, S. J., *ibidem*.)

After this epoch-making address by Father Ketteler, the Bishop of Mainz, who was a very wise and foresighted prelate keenly alive to the needs of the day, invited the young and enthusiastic priest to deliver a series of lectures on “The Great Social Questions of the Day,” in the Cathedral of Mainz. The spacious

Cathedral was crowded hours before each discourse. In this series of six conferences, Ketteler again emphasized his conviction that the social question was the most important question of the day. The real difficulty, or the real solution of the difficulty, did not lie in politics at all. The best form of government might be prostituted to the basest ends in the hands of unscrupulous politicians. The most democratic state may be a very paradise for the antisocial captains of industry, which the public opinion of more Christian civilizations considered men-of-prey, because in controlling the instrumentalities of government, they are enabled to exploit at pleasure all the ignorance and poverty of less cunning citizens.

Political democracy must be made compatible with industrial democracy. Decent human life implies vastly more than the privilege of casting a secret ballot. "If we wish to know our age, we must endeavor to fathom the social question. The man who understands that knows his age; the man who does not understand it finds the present and the future an enigma." Two years after these conferences were delivered, Ketteler was elevated to the See of St. Boniface by Pius IX.

A Great Bishop's Opportunity

It was a great time for a great bishop to reign. Communism and revolution in these years were words to conjure with. It was a most unsettled period of the world's history. A few weeks before the French Revolution that ushered in the Second Republic, Marx and Engels had issued their *Communist Manifesto*, which was to be the future gospel of Socialism. It summed up the extreme radicalism of that day. In opposition to this false Communism, Bishop von Ketteler proposed true Communism, or what has since come to be called the "Christian Democracy" of the Catholic Church. The two ideas are in deadly conflict ever since. When the struggle is over, only one of them will remain and be victorious. That one will be von Ketteler's and the Roman Catholic Church.

"The contrast between the two chief founders of these opposing social movements, the Socialist and the Catholic, Marx and Ketteler, presents indeed a picture of absorbing interest. Both are working simultaneously, independently, and from different points of view, at the solution of the same problem. Both were born leaders of most remarkable gifts, of originality in thought, of boundless capacity for work, of fiery temperament, of utter fearlessness in the enunciation of their principles. Each was supreme in his field. 'Marx stood higher, saw further, took a wider, clearer, quicker survey than all of us,' said Engels, his co-laborer. 'Marx was a genius; we others were, at best, men of talent.' Ketteler, on the other hand, was no less unquestionably the greatest prelate in the social sphere. Marx, inspired with the hatred of the lost archangel, casting off all religion and belief in God, fulminated his thunder against the entire state of existing society. Confusing abuses

with inherent evils, he strove, under cover of materialistic evolution, to set class against class in a deadly conflict, lifting up the battle cry which was to arouse every latent passion of envy, greed and hatred in the hearts of his followers: 'Expropriate the expropriators!'

"Ketteler, on the contrary, urged on by the spirit of God, came to bring peace and blessing to the world. With all the power of his high office, his majestic presence and his stirring eloquence, he fearlessly set his face against the oppression of the poor, the injustice of the law, the godlessness of the schools, and the usurpation of the authority of the Church by the state. To these last two causes he rightly attributed, in large measure, the abject poverty of the masses. He came to minister spiritually and temporally to the wants of the poor and to reorganize the working classes. That many of the conditions he describes no longer exist is due in no small degree to his initiative, and the future development both of industry and of organization, which he clearly foretold, has introduced mighty changes in the social problem." (Husslein, S. J., *The Church and Labor*, pp. 27-28.)

No Temporizing

As a bishop of the Catholic Church, he hated temporizing where the liberty of teaching her doctrines was questioned. "I think," he wrote to a colleague in 1865, "that the bloodiest persecutions have done less harm to the Church than the courtly servility of bishops." As a medium of teaching, he believed firmly in a great free Catholic press. "If St. Paul were alive today, he would be editor of a newspaper," is a saying of Ketteler's. Whenever there was a wrong to be righted, a misunderstanding to be cleared up, a Catholic truth to be vindicated, Ketteler would write articles for publication, and all Germany would read them.

The diocese of Mainz had Catholics who seemed to have lost their nerve, and allowed themselves to be the object of systematic slander and insult. They may have known that they had rights, but they never dreamed of defending them until Ketteler showed them the way. His idea of a Catholic press was one that should speak with no uncertain voice upon these important matters which come under the general head of questions of the day. His notion of a Catholic newspaper was one that should lead men and not merely chronicle their doings; enlighten them, and not merely reproduce their opinions. "In order that we may take our part in public life with unanimity, and with all that spiritual force which beyond a doubt exists in Catholic Germany, we must above all things know what we want." *Qui legit intelligat.*

Article LXIX

*The Authority of Great Names, Popes and Cardinals,
Arch Bishops, and Approved Theologians*

Why should we go on from article to article telling what Leo XIII did and said? Why should we so emphasize the fact that our teaching should be based on the traditional doctrines of the Catholic Church? Why should we point now to Cardinal Gibbons, now to Cardinal Manning, now to Cardinal Bourne? Why should we tell what Bishop von Ketteler said and did, and with what effect on the Catholic cause? Well, there are various reasons. One is that the Church is the sworn enemy of private *ipse dixits* or *videtur mihi*. All the more is she opposed to these private opinions, if these opinions are not in conformity with the body of Catholic doctrine that is supported by those in the Church who have authority to speak in her name, like popes and cardinals and bishops of the Roman hierarchy; and below these she gives an honored place to approved theologians of outstanding learning and holiness of life.

Again, if we did not follow this method the average Catholic would be inclined to think, since most of our social and industrial teaching sounds so un-American to patriotic ears, that our system of morals was rather novel, and perhaps a trifle radical. The example we gave already of the pupil who was asked to place the author's name after a quotation from the *Rerum Novarum*, and wrote Lenin, because its trend was so bolshevistic, as he thought, is proof in point! It reminds us of the government expert who produced, as evidence sufficient for the deportation of a suspected radical, a quotation from the defendant's speech to a labor union. The attorney for the defendant asked, why, now that the War was over, it was necessary to be so severe with our fellow citizens who still seemed to believe in freedom of speech in this land of the free, especially since this awful radical was not the author of the quotation in question at all, but a poor broken old man in Washington, D. C., by the name of Woodrow Wilson, who had just ceased to be commander-in-chief of the United States army and navy, and who at one time was considered safe and sane enough to be chosen President of these same United States on a platform whose chief plank was that "he kept us out of war." The quotation was verified from the *New Freedom*, a book containing the ex-president's 1912 campaign speeches! The episode could have its counterpart only in Ireland where men were shot by the English government for circulating Lloyd George's speech on the war aims of the allies!

Catholic Doctrine and Authority

It is very necessary, then, it seems to us, to quote original sources in the present crude state of the public mind. In teaching Catholic doctrine, it is the only course to pursue. The constitution of the Church is of such a nature, and is such by Divine right, that any other course is intolerable. The guardianship of the deposit is given into the hands of certain men, who are vested with authority, to teach and defend this deposit of faith and morals. The average theologian, no matter how learned or holy or brilliant, the greatest genius, layman or ecclesiastic, is only a unit who may err in his judgments, and often does so err, in spite of holiness and brilliancy, in regard to the true meaning and import of fundamental truths pertaining to Catholic doctrines, of vital importance to public and private morality. If these things are possible in the green wood, what may be expected in the dry? We cannot overemphasize this most necessary point. We are living, of course, in a democratic atmosphere where each one thinks his own opinion just about as good as his neighbor's, no matter who the neighbor may be.

Why this fallacy should be styled a democratic thing, is, of course, an insult to true democracy, because the very opposite is what approximates to the truth. One man's opinion just as good as another's! Why, it is most preposterous in every field of human knowledge or endeavor. Is one doctrine just as good as another, one surgeon as good only as the veriest quack who has purchased his diploma? Is every scholar's opinion of just exactly equal weight in regard to the speculative truths of natural science? Is every politician or every statesman equally well-fitted to represent his constituents, or his country, in the halls of Congress or around a peace conference table? Is every man just as honest intellectually, as men are found dishonest in other spheres in this mundane matter-of-fact world?

Private Opinion

If all these things are as everybody knows they are, and acts accordingly, in the spheres of religion and morality the case should be just the same, even only infinitely more so. It is a sphere where the private opinion of the greatest scientist, the most precise theologian or philosopher, the most brilliant controversialist does give us, indeed, light and leading, but as a unit alone and unsupported he does not even give us probability, not to speak of moral certitude, which is the weakest of all three kinds of human conviction. He is not the teaching Church, that infallible criterion of Catholic truth, given all the conditions which theologians define as the *ecclesia docens*. If that is the case with regard to the patient, sober, calculating, restrained, judicial, conservative, scholarly, scientifically trained expert, what shall we say of the mere tyro in theological or secular learning? What weight does his or

her private whim carry with the minds of men or women who have cultivated critical and fairly accurate knowledge, in some particular sphere of learning? In the case of the average lay American Catholic, apply these principles and what do we find?

Knowledge of Catechism and Complex Moral Problems

Well, something like this. Often a grade school education is left incomplete for many reasons. A knowledge of the truths necessary for salvation by necessity of means, and a little less often that knowledge that is considered necessary by necessity of precept. This was acquired sometimes in a Sunday school taught for five or ten minutes after mass by well-meaning school teachers whose own knowledge of the deposit of faith could be called encyclopedic only by the wildest flight of a Celtic imagination. Or even if it were acquired by more painful study in tender years from experts in theological and philosophical lore, what a long time it has been allowed to evaporate, since the last learned addition was made to the original, scanty enough, store of Christian doctrine.

Then, if such meagerly equipped ones religiously, afterwards, had to go out into the great cold world to make a living and, after the first decade of their lives, have been ever since immersed in temporal and secular business pursuits of a most trying and energy-absorbing kind, what grounds has one left for surmising that now, even though through accident or grit they have been great successes, as the social and business world considers success, they are great and final authorities on every question under the sun, especially on the complex problems of the morality of social and industrial practices which baffle solution even for those who have made a life study of these most difficult and perplexing questions?

From the nature of the case, we have the most profound contempt for quacks in every professional calling, wherein one citizen is allowed to experiment gainfully with the life, liberty and happiness of another citizen. The state demands, and rightly so, that such a one be duly qualified, and certified by competent authority, before tampering with these sacred rights. We, all of us, approve of this method of protecting the innocent and unsuspecting, whom we condescendingly refer to as our weaker brothers and sisters. Why, then, should we fling away all our prudence and logic and expect the untrained, the ignorant, or the subnormal, for one reason or another, to take on gifts of infallibility in giving opinions on great and important subjects with which they are unacquainted entirely, not through any fault of their own exactly, but because the God of nature and the supernatural never intended their brains to be used in the speculative fields of human or divine knowledge at all? Their vocational fitness indicated humbler, and just as honest, callings, wherein their limited capacities would find a more congenial exercising, than in the

high and rarer atmosphere where scholars love to roam, away from the noise, and the distractions, and the gossips, and the prejudices, and the passions of the common herd, no matter how democratic and mediocre it may boast itself to be.

Calling On the Experts

If, then, a citizen wants a good, satisfactory piece of plumbing done, he calls in one that makes a specialty of this very necessary and most hygienic avocation. If another wants a bargain in dry goods, he consults one that knows all the fine points of those cotton and calico fabrics that cover our nakedness, and the just prices thereof. But, for the reasons given above, even in these homely affairs we are altogether suspicious of the competency of a cobbler beyond his last, even though, like some Afro-American tonsorial artists, he may amuse and recreate wiser men, by essaying to pass final decisions *de omni scibili* and other omniana.

Some years ago theologians used to resent the encroachments of scientists into their special fields of research. Scientists reciprocated vehemently. What would theologians and scientists both have done to ignoramuses intruding on their sacred preserves, ignoramuses who, though often in good faith as to their shortcomings, are nevertheless an abomination of intellectual desolation in the holy places, whence emanate knowledge and science and learning concerning the beliefs and the practices inculcated by Catholic faith and Catholic morals?

A great desideratum, then, is that Catholics generally should cultivate a certain docility of mind in their attitude towards the teaching of Catholic truth. A critical outlook is a very good thing when all the instruments of a sane constructive and healthy criticism are at hand. A thorough education in secular and religious branches is a *sine qua non* in the intellectual equipment presupposed for this honest criticism that works unto edification in the kingdom of God. We have indicated a little further back what the main lineaments of an institution of the higher learning should be, and what manner of men they should be also, who alone are capable of dispensing the precious draughts of that Pierian spring of which mortals should drink deeply or taste not at all, for in that fountain even shallow draughts intoxicate the shallow brain, and the average and shallow brain is incapable of that larger drinking that sobers the more exalted spirit.

The majority of mankind in every country and in every time must accept their beliefs and their moral codes from those who have a more scientific knowledge of the foundations and origins of both. So it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. The Divine founder of the Catholic Church set up a government and a teaching body in the world for the express purpose of meeting this seemingly congenital human want, because it was morally impossible for the great body of

mankind to reach and acquire a certain knowledge of even the most necessary truths in the short span of an average miserable human life.

Teachers, Rulers and Guides by Divine Right

That great hierarchical body of teachers and rulers and sanctifiers are the Popes and Bishops of the Catholic Church in one unbroken line coming down to us from Apostolic times. That great living hierarchy in communion with the Holy and Apostolic See are our immediate teachers and rulers and guides by right divine. There is, therefore, a sense in which the Catholic Church is democratic because the humblest peasant and the fisherman can become the supreme head of this great and dominant Church, but there is another very true sense also in which its organization is more than democratic, because it surely should not detract from a democratic institution to say that its powers come not from below up, but from the Heavens down, unless democracy would arrogate to itself greater omnipotence and omniscience than divinity. In that sense the most ardent advocate of popular rights has no quarrel with us when we say that in this respect the Catholic Church is more than democratic. It is divine.

There, then, is the reason why we do not trust to private inspirations and opinions even in these more remote conclusions of natural law and morality in so far as they are the principles according to which must be solved the great and many outstanding problems of our times, which may be brought under the general head of questions of the day. That is the reason why we emphasize and again return to emphasize the fact that our teaching should conform to the good and tried traditional doctrines of the Catholic Church. That is why we point out the stand taken by this Father, and this theologian, this great and illustrious Pope, this learned and zealous bishop. These are the great authorities in the body Catholic placed over all to rule the Church of God. That is the reason why it behooves the *ecclesia discens* to hear with docility the *ecclesia docens*.

Appeal for Freedom of Catholic Teaching

An ignorance and neglect of these principles gave us that inversion of the true order, and subversion of due respect for authority, called the Reformation. The fruits of this inversion and consequent perversion of the human mind we are reaping today in the economic effects of that same Reformation. Therefore did Ketteler first of all appeal for freedom of Catholic teaching according to the constitution of the Catholic Church. It is and ever will be our glory that it was a Catholic prelate who first had the courage to hoist the flag of Christian social reform; and this at a time when the Manchester school completely ruled public

opinion. Ketteler knew very well that the people would be no better off for being freed by democratic instrumentalities from the political tyranny of petty princes, if they fell into the power of equally petty plutocrats, who usurped powers that never should belong to them by any right, human or divine. One would think this passage, from one of his first books, is very appropriate to American conditions in government today:

“Why then, for Heaven’s sake, should the sovereign will of the people be brought to a standstill by the coffers of the wealthy liberals? Shall the new social order suddenly halt as though enchanted before the purses of these millionaires? No, no, God will take care that this shall never be.” (Ketteler, *The Labor Question and Christianity*.)

Article LXX

The Church Dormant?

A writer in a current English Catholic monthly has an article under the striking title, “The Church Dormant.” We all have heard some time in our lives of the Church suffering, the Church triumphant, and the Church militant. But now, away over in Blackfriars, in Oxford, England, we find a writer adding this fourth division, “The Church Dormant.” It means the Church asleep, in plainer, more Anglo-Saxon words. It is made up of such Catholics as in the religious sense are enjoying a nice, quiet, peaceful slumber. “The Church Dormant? . . . I have never heard of it,” the puzzled reader will say: “The Church militant I know, the Church triumphant and the Church suffering I have also heard of, but what on Earth is the Church dormant? Is it by chance a new confraternity for the aged?”

“Nothing of the sort. It is merely a pathological condition of the Church militant. It is endemic, but sometimes epidemic: it is epidemic today. It is analogous to certain functional disorders of the human body, which result from over-indulgence in eating or in drinking, or even from neglecting to take sufficient exercise. For there is a curious parallelism between spiritual and material processes, and all experience teaches us that, as the body for its life and well-being requires a certain amount of hardship and discomfort in its surroundings, so too, does the soul – both the individual soul of the Christian man or woman, and the aggregate soul of the Christian Church.” (T. D. O’Donoghue, in March, 1924, *Blackfriars*.)

Now that you begin to think of it, after reading the above passage, is it not just so? It is endemic, but sometimes epidemic: it is epidemic today. If we had died a physical death as Catholics, we should all hope to be numbered as children of the Church on the other side of the grave. That is, we would be saints in Heaven and members of the Church Triumphant, or we should be members of the Church Suffering in Purgatory. There is only one other place we could be on that other side

of the grave. Its inhabitants are not members of the Church any more, and they never will be. They have ceased even to be our neighbors in the broadest, charitable sense, because they are no longer capable of loving God.

Now to come back to Earth again, if there is only one class of Catholics on this side as there are only two on the other side, we have not got much of a choice. It seems very evident that we must be numbered among the children of the Church Militant or not Catholic at all. Where, then, comes in this fourth dimensional class of Catholics that make up the Church Dormant, because it would seem that there are individuals and sometimes whole groups of individuals whom you could not truthfully designate as members militant of the Church Catholic?

The Militant Church

The writer mentioned above thinks that the word “militant” is a necessarily true description of the Church Catholic. If it is, then we are driven to the unwelcome conclusion that the Catholic dormant is scarcely a Catholic at all, and a whole Church made up of dormant Catholics would not be a Catholic Church at all. “We are accustomed,” says the writer, “to speak of the Church upon Earth as the Church Militant, but we do not always realize how necessarily true that description is. In fact, the Church upon Earth can never rightly be other than a militant body. She is never so well, and so truly herself, as when things are going ill with her, and she is never so powerful as when fighting for her life against the embattled enemies of her Lord. It is significant that the age of martyrs was also the age of her most rapid extension and development. In later times, with greater general security, and in apparently improved circumstances, she seems largely to have lost her grip, and instead of the ‘general advance’ that distinguished her beginnings, she now either marks time, or else just jogs along, barely holding her own.” (*Blackfriars, ibidem.*)

It might be satisfying to curiosity, then, to know the marks of a dormant Catholic, as we described the ignorant Catholic in our last article; but we will say that the dormant Catholic is not always an ignorant one, nor is the ignorant Catholic always dormant. We will say, however, that for the most part the terms are interchangeable. We will not describe the dormant Catholic in so-called Catholic countries, but in those like America, where the majority of the people have no church affiliations at all, and the remainder are Catholic and non-Catholic, and where the Catholic body have scarcely any influence on public opinion, or in public life, socially, educationally, or politically in any big or commanding way. In countries like this, then, we have the Catholic Church in some such atmosphere as the following passage fairly accurately describes:

The Church Everywhere Misrepresented

“Outside our own ranks, however, and especially in official quarters, Catholicism is by no means greatly loved or honored. On the contrary, since the Church is everywhere misrepresented and misunderstood, to belong to her requires an unusual degree of courage and unconventionality. We, her members, are always a little suspected either of disloyalty or reaction, or at least of eccentricity and bad taste. The Church is blamed for most things that go wrong in the world. She was blamed for the War, and will later on be blamed for the so-called peace. She is blamed for poverty, for ignorance and even for revolutionary tendencies – she, the one steady and conservative element in this mad world.”

And this, after all, cannot be called an atmosphere of persecution by any means when we compare it, for example, with the ages of persecution that gave the Church an army of martyred saints. As a matter of fact, it can, in a very truthful way, be called a most peaceful and free field for Catholic activity and every sort of spiritual endeavor. In an atmosphere of this kind, a Catholic may very well be contented to leave well enough alone. Why, he or she may say, ‘Have we not all the privileges and advantages of our religion? We surely can enjoy all that without making any struggle, without courting any suffering or unpopularity.’

“They are fair-weather Catholics, as much sheltered from the slings and arrows of the Church’s fortunes as if they had neither lot nor portion in her. Their religion never costs them anything. They are as carefree in this as the most complacent of Nonconformists, far less militant. In their private lives they have emptied their faith of most of the tonic and bracing elements – its prayers, fasting and penance, easily finding excuses of one kind or other for so doing. In their public life they jog along comfortably, half asleep, half awake, letting the bishops and priests fight their battles, and blinking helplessly at any difficulties that may arise. Do they never suspect anything discreditable in this sheltered serenity? Does it never strike them that this easy-going makeshift of a religion is altogether inconsistent with the idea of a militant Church? Moreover, the complete absence of severe persecution at the present day is not altogether a matter for rejoicing. May it not be due to the fact that the official mind regards the Church as too poor-spirited and disorganized to be dangerous? The alternative reason, namely, that thousands of Catholics are not known to be such, because they have carefully concealed their faith, and glossed over its claims, is a terrible indictment. Yet it is one that has some weight. For the dormant Church includes both types in its ranks: those whose faith is the least emphatic thing about them, a sort of hobby, like a taste for music or an aptitude for games; and those who regard it as something to be a little ashamed of – something to be kept as far as possible in the background of their lives.” (*Blackfriars, ibidem.*)

Found in Every Parish

“Who does not know these dormant Catholics?” continues this outspoken writer. “They are to be found in every parish in the land – men and women who count as Catholics, but whose Catholicism is nothing but a label. At most they attend one mass on Sundays, the low mass, when there is no sermon; they stay near the door, sitting, rather than kneeling, and vanish before the last gospel. They go to confession once a year, but never to their own parish priest; there is always some well-known director in another diocese, who, they explain impressively, alone understands their spiritual complications. Their communion – there is only one in the year – is an ordeal which they postpone until the very last day of Paschal Time. They never show their Catholicism in business or in social life, but by a singular perversity are to be found taking part in all sorts of non-Catholic functions, assisting at Protestant bazaars, working for Barnardo’s Homes, for the Y. M. C. A. and for every other rival interest. They do all this with enormously more zest than they would show in any Catholic work whatever. They are so broad-minded! And there is no greater delusion than this so-called broad-mindedness, and nothing more contemptibly shallow. It has many sinister manifestations. One has even heard of Catholic women who have made it their boast that they always work for non-Catholic Church progress! Ordinarily, this anxiety to spend oneself for those of another religion is merely vanity, since a Catholic, however lax, is always more flattered and fêted in these Protestant assemblies than these heretics themselves. In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is always made king.

“Nor is this all. In their overflowing amiability (and as a rule it is only the overflow that is amiable) they would have the priest hobnob with the parson, and parade the High Street with the Nonconformist minister. This sort of antic would be called “broad-minded Christian charity,” as indeed it would be, were the end in view the conversion of these men. For this is the priest’s work, to receive the sinner and instruct the ignorant. But all this social hobnobbing has no such end in view. It is merely a compromise. There is always a tacit understanding that no ‘shop’ is to be talked, and the man in the street naturally sees in it a proof that one religion is as good as another; that we are ‘all going the same way home.’ The militant Church has no use for this sort of amiable fooling. The priest and the parson should have none but strictly business relations with each other. They are officers of opposing armies. If British and German officers were found fraternizing like this during the war, they would have been shot at dawn. And rightly so. With the rank and file it is different; the priest must mix with them and try to influence them. But with the officers, no. The militant Church is an army in the field; a fact that is always being forgotten. The only conceivable reason why opposing officers should meet would be for the arranging of a surrender. A priest, similarly, has no

occasion for consorting with a parson, unless and until that parson asks to be instructed in the true faith. It is no part of Christian charity to blink plain facts, especially when these facts imply mighty and eternal consequences.

The Dormant Catholic a Coward

“Another thing: it often happens nowadays that ignorant and impudent attacks are made upon the Church in diverse Protestant pulpits, and the most ridiculous and unhistorical claims are put forward by some glib and callow preacher, banking upon the ignorance or indifference of his hearers. The local press, ever on the side of the big battalions, invariably reports all this at length, and always with a fine show of breezy and unctuous impartiality. But the dormant Catholic sleeps on, or at any rate pretends to sleep. He will never thrust back the lie into the lying throat. He will not refute the false assertions of the local parson, with whom he may be playing tennis or golf the same afternoon. It used to be said that Waterloo was won upon the playing fields of Eton. That may or may not have been so. But certainly many a useful skirmish has been lost by the Church upon the tennis lawns and golf links – not to mention the tea tables – of England. About these places there is an atmosphere like that of the Lotus Isles, soothing, enervating and enslaving, in which the dormant Catholic flourishes exceedingly. For your dormant Catholic is not only a coward, he is also very much of a snob. He is the man who will send his children to non-Catholic schools, to have their little hearts corrupted and their little minds deceived. There they will learn nothing about their religion, will be deprived of all sacramental help, and will inevitably – yes, inevitably – fall headlong into sin; but as an offset to this, they will acquire that fashionable and worldly insolence, that slangy hardness of tone and manner, which makes the ordinary Catholic despair. Is this picture overdrawn? We wonder.”

We will tell next what Bishop Ketteler did to this sort of dormant and deliquescent Catholicity in the Germany of his day.

Article LXXI

The Effects of von Ketteler's Teaching on German Social Action

Bishop von Ketteler found a Catholic body in Germany in his day that resembled in many points our own Catholic body in America today. They were just like what we have been describing in our last two articles. They were Christians of course, though many of them could scarcely tell just why. If they were on a certain side in the social troubles of these times, they were sure of one thing, and that was that Christianity was all right in its place, but that it had no bearing on the social

question. It would be awfully inconvenient if it did, and therefore it was nice and easy and highly respectable and conservative to think that it had not.

Ketteler, on the contrary, thought that Catholic influence on civilization was quite indispensable. It alone could develop a sentiment of justice and moderation which could keep the social organism healthy. If Bishop von Ketteler did nothing else than bring home to his generation the fact that Christianity really has an important and very necessary bearing on social questions, his title to fame would have been secure. This is a truth that should be obvious to all Catholics everywhere, and yet so far is this from being the case, that there will always be found a goodly number who oppose in theory and practice this truth so incessantly preached and so convincingly proved by the illustrious Bishop of Mainz.

The opposite contention, so pleasing and acceptable to many, is also the one that finds most favor among Socialists, a class of individuals that are now so few as to be almost entirely negligible. The socialistic contention is that religion is a matter that can at least be allowed to stand over – a matter of the inner life merely. Von Ketteler was able to show clearly and convincingly from the nature of Christianity and the tradition of the Catholic Church that the actual functioning of society was altogether dependent upon the presence of a religion which should manifest itself in outward act. This is an old, very old truth, that is taught everywhere in moral theology tracts, and has been so taught from the time of the Apostles to the present day. Because it is taught in Latin textbooks in classrooms to young theologians, that does not make it fall so much under the *disciplina arcani* that it becomes radical and proximately heretical when translated into English or German, and taught from the pulpit and platform by Ketteler in Germany in the nineteenth century, or Dr. John A. Ryan in America in the twentieth. It is this old Catholic thesis, *viz.*, is affective charity sufficient for a Christian to save his soul? And the answer is, no, if he has the means and the opportunity, affective charity must become effective, and display and manifest itself externally in good works done for our neighbor in his necessity.

Class Consciousness Effect of Class Selfishness

Class consciousness, after all, according to von Ketteler, is a direct effect of class selfishness. Class warfare is an altogether abnormal condition of things in well-ordered society. It is present today in a more or less violently acute form in all industrial countries. It is a result of the ignoring of Christian principles by all parties to the conflict. Moral principles cut no figure with leaders on either side. There is where the Church will refuse to be ignored. Moral forces springing from religion are necessary for social peace, and the Catholic Church is needed, to keep these moral forces to the front and in constant play.

But why should Catholics busy themselves with these social questions? It sometimes stirs up trouble. A certain silent prudence would seem to call for quiet unobtrusive inaction in all these matters. If we do not say anything, nobody will know that we exist at all. Then we shall have peace, perfect peace and quiet and calm. Oh, yes, indeed, that is all true. Indeed, it is painfully true. It is so true that it gives us a dormant Church instead of a militant one, as we showed in our last article.

But here comes this Bishop von Ketteler person, whom Leo XIII hailed as his great precursor in preaching his gospel of social action, and throws an episcopal bomb into this lethal, quiet and perfectly peaceful slumbering Catholic body. "Catholics, in fine, might associate themselves on the whole with the aspirations and movements of the working classes without violating the principles of their religion. Indeed, their religion gave them additional motives for so doing. And their efforts would be vain unless guided by Christian principles." Von Ketteler's work was not confined to public utterances before vast concourses of the laity. In 1869 he had an opportunity of impressing on his brothers of the German Episcopate the mighty importance and timeliness of preaching Catholic social doctrines with all the authority that can come only from these official custodians of Catholic faith and morals, the Bishops of the Catholic Church.

The Role of the Catholic Church

An episcopal conference was held at Fulda. The energetic Bishop of Mainz was charged with the drafting of reports dealing with Catholic efforts on behalf of various classes of the working population. In the course of these reports, especially that dealing with the condition of factory hands, and child labor, von Ketteler launched forth enthusiastically on the role which the Catholic Church was called upon to play in the solution of the social question. He hacked to pieces the objection that these social questions were not sufficiently ripe to justify the interference of the Church. He asked the assembled prelates if the time had not come when they should see to it that their clergy should take an active hand in the solution of these questions, that they should even take part in the formation and moral guidance of workmen's associations and give them all the help in their power.

The bishops only needed to hear von Ketteler to be convinced of the urgent and present necessity of Catholic social action. It was quite within the realm of possibility that some of them, until then, did not know just what was happening to the Catholic workmen of Germany because of this *laissez-faire* attitude on the part of their spiritual guides. Ketteler was able to tell them what was taking place away down among the laboring masses; he was able to tell them because he had gone

away down among them, and sympathized with them in their trials and difficulties, and hardships, and troubles. He, too, had pity on the multitude. He had seen them go over to the camp of the socialists because they thought that the socialists were their only friends, perhaps it was because they had heard it said by someone, who ought to have known better, that the Catholic religion was a matter that concerned itself with the inner life merely, that laborers should be patient under all the injustice and annoyances of their hard lot, because it would all cease when they died anyway! He knew what they were saying in their meeting places because he had mixed shoulder to shoulder with them, and had time and again held them spellbound listening to his eloquent words, dropping down upon their bruised hearts like the gentle dew from Heaven. He knew what they were thinking about, and that is often by far a more serious matter than what they are talking about.

There is nothing that should give us more matter for serious meditation than what a silent, sullen mob of people are thinking about, if they are convinced that they have a grievance, and especially a grievance that they have despaired of having redressed. People are in a very dangerous frame of mind when they cease talking loud about a grievance that touches them to the quick, and seems to be ignored by those leaders who have it in their power to redress it and are apparently unconcerned.

You remember the great silences in Paris all these long, quiet, hot days before the fall of the Bastille on July 14th, 1789. We wonder if there was not the same silent, ominous quiet in Moscow and Petrograd before the fall of the late Czar of all the Russias. Even nature itself lapses into this still calm and dreamy mood before the thunder claps presaging a furious storm. How that saying attributed to Marie Antoinette must have burnt into the silent souls of these hungry *sans-culottes*, when the Queen of France wondered why they so persisted in asking for bread. "Why don't they eat cake?" said the beautiful and innocent Queen. It is sayings like that alone that can explain the wild and savage extremes of cruelty and every excess resorted to by the French revolutionaries in reeking vengeance on those who should have known and heeded the silent thoughts of mobs of discontented people, who had neither bread nor cake to eat, and who thought nobody cared whether they had or not.

Von Ketteler Endorsed

The bishops of Germany immediately endorsed von Ketteler's views. We will quote a passage from their recommendations, that resulted from their serious deliberations, under the influence of Ketteler's eloquence. It will be a mild surprise for pious people who would confine a priest's activities to the altar, the class room, and the confessional:

“The Church must awaken interest in the condition of the working classes, especially among the clergy. These are often little interested in the matter, because they are not convinced of the actual existence, magnitude and pressing danger of social evils. They do not grasp the nature and extent of the social question, and they are entirely in the dark as to the method of helping towards a solution. The social question, therefore, must be no longer neglected in the training of the clergy in philosophy and pastoral theology. It is much to be desired that individual priests should be induced to take up the study of political economy, and should be furnished with traveling expenses in order that they may learn to know from personal observation both the needs of the working classes and the institutions which help to meet them.

“It would scarcely be profitable to call into existence an ecclesiastical organization for the purpose, which should embrace the whole of Germany. It is to be feared that such an organization would be wanting in vitality. The solution of the labor question is, moreover, rather a local matter, since men’s needs and the remedies for these needs vary considerably. On the other hand, so far from being open to objection, it would appear to be in the highest degree desirable that in each diocese, without further delay, one or more fit and proper persons, clerical or lay, should be appointed and commissioned to interest themselves in the labor question. They should compile statistics of the factories and workshops, and of the operatives in their respective districts, and should inform themselves as to the physical, intellectual, moral and religious condition of these operatives, as well as of the institutions and organizations which have been set on foot in their districts for the well-being of the working classes and the improvement of their condition. A meeting of the diocesan deputies either for each state, or for the whole of Germany, should be arranged, at which each might report on his own diocese, and a general consultation be held as to ways and means of solving the labor question.”

German Clergy Interested

As a result of these recommendations of the episcopal conference at Fulda in 1869, the clergy of all Germany became interested in social subjects. Priests began immediately to exert that influence on the course of social reform which has been carried on up to the present day with such pronounced success. They began to read and study those social principles that Ketteler had been preaching and writing about, in season and out of season, for the previous twenty years. They founded a review, the *Christlich-soziale Blätter*, which was at once a guide and a stimulus to the clergy. It was the beginning of the copious supply of Catholic literature on the social question which is one of the great glories of Catholic Germany to this day.

Ketteler's last book was published in 1875. Its title was *Catholics in the German Empire*. He stressed, therein, the duty of the government to assist in the formation of co-operative associations, in order to protect workmen and their families against unjust exploitation. He demanded that the state should prohibit child labor to all under fourteen years of age. Married women should be prevented from working in factories. The Sunday observance should be legally enforced. Factory inspection and limitation of hours of labor should be compulsory. The demands incorporated in this work subsequently became the program of the German Catholic Centre party.

Religion and Popular Welfare

Ketteler was forever urging the connection between religion and popular welfare. He had no patience with these dormant Catholics who would keep religion in its proper place, as they used to say, "an affair of the inner life merely." It was so convenient, you know, to keep it there where nobody could see it. His faith in the Church as the good Samaritan of bruised and wounded humanity made Ketteler a prophet to his own and future generations. He was once only a voice crying in the wilderness, tens of thousands thronged to hear him long before he died. He was a Baptist preparing the rough way that has since become so plain for his followers. He was confident that when he was gone a Vicar of Christ should arise who would bid the Church, "go to the people."

The year after his death, Leo XIII ascended the throne of the Fisherman. Ketteler testified in prophecy to Leo, and Leo was inspired by the spirit of Ketteler. "The Workingman's Pope" set the seal of Peter upon the social teaching of the "Workingman's Bishop," and gave it as a charter to the world. As Christ pointed back to John the Baptist as his prophet, saying, "there hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist," once also when the great name of Wilhelm Emmanuel Baron von Ketteler, Bishop of Mainz, was spoken of in the presence of Leo, the great Pontiff said: "Ketteler was my great precursor." This was the man whom small Catholics used to call a socialist because of his denunciations of capitalistic tyranny. This was the man who went down into his grave a man of many disappointments. This was that militant bishop who made dormant Germans the most militant Catholics in all Europe, and who never despaired of final victory for the cause that was so dear to his great heart.

In a letter to a friend in 1872 he wrote: "I have an invincible conviction that the time will come when God will send the world a Pope who will know how to awaken in the Church all her divine forces. Nothing is more deeply anchored in my soul than the belief that great and wonderful things will be realized by this Pope."

That Pope has come to cast fire upon the Earth, and what willed he more than that it be enkindled among Catholics everywhere.

Article LXXII

The Social, Industrial and Economic Teaching of Modern Catholic Leaders is Nothing New. What Labor Thinks of the Church

We have been saying from time to time what the attitude of the Church towards labor is theoretically. No one could safely say that the attitude of the Church is or has been otherwise at any time in her whole history. Von Ketteler, or Leo XIII, or Manning, or Bourne, or any worker, or writer on social subjects, has invented nothing new in a doctrinal way. They have recalled men's minds to the knowledge of the old things when they were inclined to forget just what the Church stood for in the past, and stands for today. There is no room for argument with regard to these things.

But what will be extremely interesting, we presume, is to say what labor thinks about the Church and what labor asks of the Church. We must be clear on that point. As a matter of fact, labor thinks very well of the Church and asks nothing of the Church, but just those things that the Church is willing to grant to labor. Now then also, in stating what labor thinks of the Church and demands of it, we are not giving our own opinion of what labor should think or demand, but what it actually does think. When we say the Church, we do not mean the official teaching Church, nor does labor mean this either. Labor knows well the distinction between the Church and some Churchmen. But the great trouble is just here on this very point. The only way to find out just what the real thoughts of a man are is to go and ask him. Let him speak out his mind. That is what we are going to do, then, in this paper. What do the spokesmen of labor ask of the Church?

An Answer to Labor's Question

In the *Forum* for August, 1923, an answer is given to this question. Anyone who mingles with labor leaders to any extent knows the substance of the answer very well already. But for those who do not so mingle, the answer will be extremely interesting. Again we repeat it, in order to avoid misunderstanding, the answer is not our own. It is the answer of labor to its own question. "We have our own opinions about the justice of labor's criticism. Those who have read these pages know what these opinions are.

"The typical sermon on Capital and Labor runs something like this: Capitalists are often Godless men lacking personal faith and Christian virtue. Laborers are often controlled by dangerous foreign agitators. Capital and Labor must stop this

dreadful fighting and get together in Christian love. The labor leader who hears this kind of sermon exclaims: ‘Rot! The church is preaching sentimental nonsense. Why don’t the preachers say something?’ ”

By “the church” in the above quotation the writer means all the churches, Catholic and non-Catholic. In other words, he says the churches are speaking platitudes, and very harmless platitudes at that. We judge that from the last sentence: “Why don’t the preachers say something?” “The labor movement,” he goes on to say, “is made up of good Catholics, good Jews, indifferent Protestants, Bolsheviks, Southern Presbyterians and infidels.” A fairly representative cross-section of American life, all will admit. “No one can speak for all American labor in regard to any subject, least of all religion. . . . The workers do not ordinarily think of their movement as having anything to do with the church. It is neither hostile nor loyal. It is simply detached.”

That is about the condition of things. We have heard an official high up in the councils of the American Federation of Labor, who is a good Catholic, express himself, in presence of a fairly large and representative gathering, in similar terms. If we remember rightly, he declared that American labor had got what it has without the aid of the Church, and was going to go on to get what it looked for independently of the Church, although it would welcome help and sympathy from any quarter extended, including the Church. We would be inclined to think that Catholic labor and trade unionists, whether leaders or members of the rank and file, think just this way, with possibly some very few exceptions. Those outside the Church who are active in the work of the labor movement would be unanimously of this way of thinking, we surmise.

Attitude of Labor Toward Christianity

The attitude of labor towards Christianity, which is a wider and more vague expression, is about the same as the attitude towards the Church. Labor has a concept of Christianity, and Capital has one also. Labor thinks their concept is the correct one and, with equal emphasis, Capital thinks their own is the only real one. The labor leader’s opinions are confirmed when he reads utterances such as those of Mr. Gary, of the United States Steel Corporation, who declared before the Iron and Steel Institute recently that he wanted the principles of Christianity applied to American life. Then he announced that the twelve-hour day must be continued in the steel industry. Many a worker who read that utterance remarked: “If that is Christianity, where do I come in?” Well, there it is. If Christianity fitted Mr. Gary’s plans, well and good. But if it were at all inconvenient and spoiled these plans, well, then, maybe Christianity could be changed here and there so as to make it fit in! There is the eight-hour day. There is the twelve-hour day. There is

labor, and there is Mr. Gary. Where does Christianity come in? If it comes in with Mr. Gary and the Steel Trust, one will scarcely expect laborers to be very enthusiastic about becoming Christians if they are not Christians already. If they are Christians, well then, is there going to be one sort of Christianity to be preached to labor unions and another that suits Mr. Gary? It is, of course, impossible to please both by trying to carry water on both shoulders. We are, of course, speaking the mind of labor with regard to those things that labor asks and expects of the Church and Christianity, according to labor's concept of Christianity and the Church. So as to be absolutely fair in presenting that mind, we will let labor speak on this point itself.

Labor Speaks

"Nevertheless, there is a profound and important connection between the church and the labor movement. The church looks at the world and declares it is evil. We of the labor organizations look at the world and declare it is evil. The church says that the world needs love, brotherhood, faith. We look at the world and say, 'Yes, the world needs faith, love, and brotherhood, but you cannot have these things without some specific improvements in our economic affairs. We want to destroy certain important evils in society.' "

What has the Church to do with these evils? Simply this. Labor believes that the Church must fight these evils or be untrue to its trust. We want certain things because we consider them the most vital things in life. We will regard the Church as a friend if it helps us to get them; we will regard the Church as an enemy if it opposes us in the struggle, or if it tries to maintain a neutral attitude toward the great problems which we face.

First, there is the inequality of wealth. Why should some workers in America starve while some idlers in America eat? Why should there be a Fifth Avenue and an East Side? Do the people of Fifth Avenue need more money? If so, why?

America has become known as a country of millionaires, but the workers are not getting an increased share of its prosperity. Recent statistical studies reviewed by George Soule show that the real wages of American workers were less in 1919 than in 1899. The people who talk about labor's silk shirts and automobiles are usually the people who would never dream of living on an American workers' average wage.

The appalling facts of low wages in the factories and mines of America have been revealed by almost every official investigation. The Interchurch World Movement registered that seventy-two per cent of the steel strikers in the last great strike received less than a minimum-of-comfort wage. The Federal Industrial Relations commission estimated that far more than half of our workers do not

receive enough for food, clothes, shelter, and old age. This in the country of Newport and Palm Beach.

And the laborers are not at all so very enthusiastic about modern inventions like the very fine intricate and complicated machinery of industrialism. In this point they are very mediaevalist. "We fight against the monotony of the machine process and the long hours of uninspiring work. The twelve-hour day has attained great publicity and it has received the denunciation of many distinguished reactionaries as well as liberals. It deserves that denunciation; it is the most inhuman fact in our industrial life. But it should not be allowed to obscure the other inhuman fact, the machine process itself. In almost every industry the workers are being reduced to the level of gear shifts, oil cups, and automatic stitchers. Our work is as glorious as the crank of a phonograph."

What They Are, Do and Want

The monotonous grind and din of the machine makes the relief of the short workday the greatest boon to the laborer. The employer usually is a member of a very wealthy and strong union, the corporation or trust company. The laborer must bargain with that big union. The laborer unionizes himself so as to be able to bring the strength and pressure of collective bargaining to bear on the other party to the bilateral contract of labor-hiring and firing. The employer launches the open shop movement, and the labor union retaliates with the strike. It is a real war depending on either side on force, pure and simple, for victory. The laborer wants wages as high as a dollar an hour in skilled trades. His reason is that he wants decent teeth for himself and his family, milk for the children, a doctor when someone gets sick or injured by the machines he tends, an occasional suit of clothes, a little education for the boys and girls, but no college course, a magazine once in a while, a victrola, and even the extravagant luxury of a Ford, if everything goes well after a long while of watchful waiting.

And the laborer asks the Church what it has to say: "Yes, we know these things, we are with you and we protest against them," says the churchman. Do you? Where? How loudly do you protest? How many buts and ifs and ands are attached to the denunciation? We recognize that the neutral attitude is advisable in investigating industrial facts, but the attitude should not continue after the facts have been disclosed. We feel that the church should be just as militant in this opposition to industrial ills as it was in its fight against negro slavery or the saloon. Why play safe? Jesus didn't."

What Labor Wants

What does labor want the Church to do about what labor considers injustice and a grievance? Here is the answer of labor: "First of all, we would like to have constant denunciation by preachers and church leaders of low wages, long hours, of the denial of real collective bargaining and the economic inequality of our society. This would imply a new set of social-moral ideals. . . . Secondly, we believe that the church is well situated to make fact-studies of modern industrial situations and report to the public the truth that is disclosed. . . . And, as a third request, we want the church to give us some great personalities like the late Bishop Williams of Michigan. The British labor movement has hundreds of local and national leaders who are nurtured in the church. . . . The moral earnestness of the search for ultimate things is found in both the church and the labor movement. . . . In the church are a few men who have the economic ideal of the labor movement; in the unions are a few men who have the moral idealism of the church. In religious belief the two will never come together, but in emancipating the workers from this present evil world, the most enlightened sections of the church and the labor movement have a co-operating future, a future of pain and opportunity" (all the quotations given above are from the article, "What Labor Asks of the Church," in the August, 1923, *Forum*.)

These are some of the big things that labor asks of the church. They seem very just and fair. But by church with a small "c" the writer evidently means the "Churches." The Catholic Church would answer, is that all you ask of us? Why, von Ketteler asked all of these things and more! Leo XIII denounced all the things you denounce, and asked the things you ask for toiling men and women. So did Manning and Bourne and Gibbons. So do all our social scientists in the domain of industrial ethics. So did the Church always teach. But labor does not seem to know any of these things, because we find American labor asking the church for some great personalities like the late Bishop Williams of Michigan. Whose fault is it that labor does not know these things that we teach and our great Popes and Cardinals and Bishops, great personalities who spent their best years teaching and preaching these great Catholic, social and industrial doctrines? Is the Social Reconstruction Program issued by the American National Catholic War Council a great secret even yet? It contains the answer of the Catholic Church to all these demands of labor, and it grants them all and more. There is a great work here for American priests in making known the answer the Catholic Church gives to those questions of labor, to the more than sixty millions of men and women who are asking these questions in America today. The majority of these people think we have no answer at all. Again, whose fault is it that they think so? And again, who gave them so to understand? Certainly it was not the official teachers of the Catholic Church, or its

official teaching. When these millions ask of us the bread of Catholic social and industrial teaching, we must beware of offering them a stone. And there be those who think the time has not come when it is necessary to answer these instant questionings!

Article LXXIII

What the Church Thinks of Labor's Demands

In our last article we commented on the demands labor makes on the Church – “church” being written with a small “c.” The spokesman for labor was Mr. Paul Blanshard, a graduate of the University of Michigan who has risen high in the ranks of unionized labor. In this we will comment on what the “church,” again with a small “c,” thinks of the reasonableness of labor’s demands. The spokesman for the Church will be Dr. Ladd, Dean of the Berkeley Divinity school, Middletown, Connecticut. When both sides are heard from, we would ask our serious readers to compare the attitude of the churches with that of the Church, and draw their own conclusions accordingly. Dr. William Palmer Ladd wrote also in the August, 1923, *Forum*.

“The Church’s attitude toward labor is becoming a subject of interest to many, both within and without the Church, and of keen apprehension to some. The publication of the Inter-Church report on the steel strike revealed to the country what an influence for good or evil the Church might exercise, when it chose, in the field of industrial reform. The clergy have in recent months been deluged with literature of a propaganda character both for and against the claims of labor. Many who belong to the propertied or employing classes are stirred over what they consider radical tendencies in the Church; while the laboring man shows his disapproval of what he considers the Church’s prejudiced or lukewarm attitude toward his aspirations by standing aloof for the most part from all forms of organized religion. Within the Church there is a wide difference of opinion among both clergy and laity as to what should be the policy of the Church toward the labor problem.

“There is an obvious but deceptive way out of all difficulties – to decide that the Church ought not to have any attitude whatever toward the labor movement. Those who hold this view believe that the Church’s duty toward labor is fulfilled when it receives the laboring man to the privileges of its membership on exactly the same terms it offers to other men; that the Church should keep aloof from all economic disputes, and concern itself with men’s spiritual needs only. They believe that the clergy should confine themselves to preaching what is sometimes called the old-fashioned gospel, administering the ordinances of religion, and giving pastoral care to the comfortless, the sick, and the dying; and that they should leave business men

to carry on their affairs according to the standards of the business world.” (*The Forum*, August, 1923, pp. 1779-1780.)

A Summing Up of the Question

That is a fairly accurate summing up of the question, whether the Church should interfere in the war between capital and labor. There is the great mass of the laboring population on one side, as Dr. Ladd writes, who at least, away in the back of their heads, think that the church is no great friend of theirs, in fact, who think that she is prejudiced or lukewarm toward their aspirations. As a consequence of this suspicion on the part of labor, it stands aloof from all forms of organized religion for the most part. There is where the idea originated that even the Catholic Church has somehow or other come to play the role of the moral policeman of capitalism. We are not saying whether or how this idea corresponds with the objective truth. We are only stating that the idea is there, rightly or wrongly is altogether another matter.

Then, on the other side, there is the capitalistic view that the Church ought not to have any attitude whatever toward the labor movement, keeping itself coldly aloof from all economic disputes, and concerning itself with men's spiritual needs only, having its clergy to confine themselves to preaching what is sometimes, though, of course, very unhistorically and erroneously, called the old-fashioned gospel. As a matter of very sad fact, as we ourselves have pointed out again and again in these pages, and elsewhere, this attitude of mind is not confined to capitalistic circles entirely. Though it should be anathema to every Catholic, to some it appears, even yet, as the good conservative thing. A certain tendency in all of us to a sort of comfortable easy-going mental and moral laziness accounts for three-fourths of this mentality, while ignorance of the true role the Church is expected by its nature to play in the world, accounts for the other fourth. Dr. Ladd writes like a Roman Catholic bishop on this phase of the subject.

What Is Implied

“Everyone is familiar with such or similar opinions. What they really imply is that the Church should keep out of the field of ethics, for it is impossible for the Church to concern itself with the ethics of the individual without getting into the sphere of his conduct as a member of society. But for the Church to abandon its function as an ethical teacher would be for it to break with the whole Christian tradition. The Christianity of the western world in particular has been distinguished for its emphasis upon conduct. Its glory has been that it has been a practical religion. Not invariably with success, yet always it has greatly dared to play a part

in the rough-and-tumble of human affairs. It is not likely Christianity will turn back from such a tradition to a form of Oriental mysticism. Moreover, a religion that is non-ethical is certain, sooner or later, to become immoral. Few maintain that the Church ought definitely or officially to ally itself with labor or with any other social, economic, or political group. But that it should stand aloof from every social problem is quite another matter. The Church is not likely to get a hearing for a non-ethical gospel. Nor will it gain hearers for a timid proclamation of the truth. Rather will the approval of all serious-minded men go out to a Church which is attempting, even if it sometimes fails, to use its influence in any helpful way for the elimination of social strife and the establishment of a reformed social order.” (“The Christian Attitude Toward Labor,” *Forum*, August, 1923.)

Catholic Authorities in Agreement

We could give quotations from papal encyclicals paraphrasing every sentence of that last paragraph. We could give whole speeches of Ketteler emphasizing these same points. Manning and Bourne and scores of other Catholic prelates have repeated these truths over and over again in pastoral letters and addresses on various occasions. Our great moral theologians at all times and places have taught this Catholic truth in their ethical treatises. A very slight acquaintance with the history of Catholic moral teaching in this sphere will bear out our contention. Dr. Ladd is acquainted with our Catholic past and honestly gives us due credit for our traditional stand on ethical and moral, social and industrial issues.

“A glance at the history of the Christian Church will show that it has from the beginning concerned itself with social betterment. This was notably true in the Middle Ages when its authority was more widely acknowledged than at any other period in its history. No one then imagined that the Church ought to be ruled out of the field of social and economic problems. Mother Church with one hand pointed her children toward a future Heaven and Hell, but with the other she gave them firm and thoughtful guidance in their everyday business of buying and selling, spending and saving, according to the Christian rule. There was an orthodox system of business ethics as well as an orthodox theological doctrine. The greatest theologian of the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas, was also the greatest economist of his age. Questions about monopoly, speculation, rates of interest, fair prices, wages, and hours of labor came within the cognizance of the Church. Economics was a recognized department of ethics, as ethics was of theology.” (*Forum*, August, 1923.)

The most ardent of mediaevalists could have paid the Catholic Church no greater tribute. Alas, that we should find so many of our own talking so disparagingly of the moral influences of the Catholic Church during that same

period of her most glorious history. Dr. Ladd, of course, will not admit that the passing of the authority of the Church in the sphere of social ethics was simply due to the loss of prestige which it suffered in the sectarian strife of the Reformation period. He thinks that the Church found itself towards the end of the Middle Age face to face with a social order immeasurably more complex than that of any previous age.

“In face of this new social order and in the midst of the new problems of enormous complexity created by it, it is hardly to be expected that the Church should have worked out any clean-cut and consistent ethical program.” He will admit, however, that the industrial revolution in England is enormously more important in its influence on our lives, though it does not so figure in the school histories, than the American political revolution of 1776. And while Dr. Ladd is glad that the Church of these days followed, as it did, a do-nothing policy, he is speaking not of the Catholic, but the Anglican, Church.

The voice of the Catholic Church, as we have so often said, was dead in the land during these bad years of the industrial revolutionary changes. He mentions William Wilberforce, Malthus and Paley, the first an evangelical layman and the two last noted divines of the English Church, as examples of the best minds of that day, whose social ethics would be very well reflected in such a work as Paley’s pamphlet, entitled “Reasons for Contentment Addressed to the Laboring Part of the British Public,” in which he attempted to prove that poverty is a pleasure rather than a hardship! Wilberforce will be remembered as the one chiefly responsible for the combination act which disgraced the statute books of England for a quarter of a century, under which any workman who combined with another in order to get an increase of wages or a decrease of hours might be sent for three months to jail.

A report on the social evils of their day from men of this caliber would have expressed the prejudices of the *nouveaux riches*, the exploiters of child labor, and the profiteers whose influence dominated the life of England as well as its Church at that period. And these three would be canonized by American chambers of commerce today as saints of safety and sanity and conservatism!

Problems Still Unsolved

Dr. Ladd shows a very remarkable understanding of the problems created for the Church and society by the complexity of the modern post-Reformation social and industrial order, problems for which, he states, neither society nor the Church have as yet found a solution. “Our material development has outrun our thinking. How to integrate the political and the industrial order is the statesman’s greatest problem. How to escape from a machinery-ridden world, or rather how to spiritualize that world, is the problem of humanity, and not only of the Church.”

What a pleasure to read the writings of such an intelligent clergyman, even though he is not a member of the true fold. Would that the shepherds of our own flocks had all such an intelligent grasp of the problems that are vexing and perplexing the thinking men and women of our day and country. This is no time for intellectual trifling above all the periods of civil or ecclesiastical history ever before, because for the resolution of these problems of humanity the Church must do her share or suffer the consequences of a still further alienation from the current of American life.

“It cannot be expected to have, and it does not have, ready-made answers to all religious and ethical questions. It must think out the problems of Christian living for every new age, and it must find ever new answers for both new and old questions. It must learn from the past, but it should live up to its best, not its worst traditions. And it must not fix its eyes on the past, whether that past be of the first century or the thirteenth, in such a way that it has no perception of the needs of today. It must study the past and the present that it may have a vision of a better future, and may work for that future in co-operation with all men of good will of whatever creed. There is increasing dissatisfaction with the do-nothing tradition. The Church cannot live and thrive on a merely negative program. Between the blind, destructive economic forces of the present day on the one hand, and the awakening spiritual aspirations on the other, the Church cannot take a merely non-committal attitude, or if it do so, it may well suffer a still further loss of influence. There are certainly some helpful things it may do with reference to the labor problem.” (*Forum, ibidem.*)

Old-fashioned Teaching

What these helpful things are we will tell in our next article, and we will show that Dr. Ladd’s program is just the very simple and old-fashioned thing that the Catholic Church has been teaching from time immemorial. If it appears new, and strange, and a trifle radical, it is because we have got used to accepting many theories and many practices as safe and sane and conservative, which are not as moral or ethical as we would like to think they are. Honest thinking and truthful straightforward speaking may hurt here and there, but they pay best in the long run. Where would Wilberforce’s or Paley’s social and industrial programs get the Church today in England? Pious foolishness has a limit beyond which it becomes absolutely criminal.

Article LXXIV

*What the Church Can Do to Encourage its Members in
Acquiring an Intelligent Attitude Toward Labor*

We have spoken in our two recent articles of the demands of labor on the Church and what the Church thinks in general of these demands. We will be more specific this time and give a few suggestions as to what the Church may do to encourage its members in the way of acquiring an intelligent attitude toward labor. The word specific is used advisedly because vague and platitudinous generalities get us nowhere. Again, the suggestions given here are not the views of a Catholic economist but of a non-Catholic churchman. The point we would ask the reader to notice is that all our fine Catholic thunder is being stolen from us, and there is grave danger, unless we begin to teach our own doctrines on these questions, that the public will be lead to believe that the Catholic viewpoint is not very friendly toward labor at all. In other words, there is danger of being jockeyed into a false position. We will allow Dr. William Palmer Ladd to state the question in his own way:

What the Church Can Do?

“First, the Church can encourage in its members an intelligent attitude toward labor. The indifference of so many churchmen to the labor problem is a part of the general indifference of educated people to all economic subjects. The science of economics has only recently won any recognition in our traditional school and college curriculum. Our fathers did not consider it a part of the training of the gentleman that he should know too much about the world in which he was to live. They thought it better that their children should spend their school and college years in learning how Xenophon’s soldiers foraged for food rather than in acquiring any knowledge of such things as malnutrition or real wages among the day laborers of the present day; better that they should be familiar with the conspiracy of Catiline than with the theories of Karl Marx; better to know the ins and outs of the feudal than of the industrial system. And as for the student of theology, it is even yet considered more essential that he should know Hebrew and Greek than that he should know the elementary facts about industrial history or the prevailing industrial system of the world.” (*Forum*, August, 1923.)

It is not to be wondered at if a Church whose members have been educated in the linguistic tradition should be somewhat at sea in dealing with the labor problem, says Dr. Ladd. And we must never forget that it is a problem. Therefore any simple, easy solution is not adequate to the question’s answering at all. For example, to say that there is a war going on between capital and labor, that this war

threatens to disrupt the whole social fabric and destroy civilization as we know it, may not be an exaggerated statement of the facts, but to say that the love of God is the cure for all this trouble, because then when both parties to the quarrel begin to love God, as they should do, of course, they will begin to see the problem from the same angle and all misunderstandings will cease, and behold, there will be industrial, social and economic peace, is, in the language of Paul Blanshard, to talk sentimental nonsense. The reason is only too evident. Two men may love God equally well, and they may equally well disagree on every other debatable problem under the sun. As individuals, so may whole groups of class-conscious individuals do. Something more than mere benevolent good intentions are required for solving industrial problems then, just as something more than pious good intentions are required for solving any other problem. Because our Church is infallible on matters of Faith and morals is not a sufficient or even a good reason why we, its members, should dispense with all intellectual equipment in attacking those baffling questions of the day, which are crying so loud for some sort of solution. Dr. Ladd is very much to the point here:

A Church Handicapped

“And a Church in which neither clergy nor laity have reached any well-informed or carefully considered convictions on economic questions is seriously handicapped in any desire it may have to be helpful either to the laboring man or the employer in pressing on them a Christian solution of the labor problem. If one is to teach, one must first of all go to school, and this principle applies even to a teaching Church. Even if it have a divine revelation in its possession it can hardly make that revelation effective unless it proclaim it in the language of its bearers, and can apply its eternal truth to the changing needs and problems of an actual world. The Church authority, which in our day is likely to carry most weight, is that which is rooted in reason and illumined with adequate knowledge.”

Few will quarrel with this stand. And while we all subscribe to these principles and put adequate intelligent knowledge where the Church always has put it, still, as Dr. Ladd says, it would be absurd to expect of the average Church member, whether of the clergy or the laity, any expert knowledge of economic science. But men do not spurn all knowledge of the laws of health because they are not trained in medicine. Some general knowledge of medicine is an almost essential part of the equipment of the educated man. Such knowledge in the economic field may guide the practical judgment of the Christian and save him from egregious blunders, as it will certainly extend his sympathies. This clarity of judgment and quickness of sympathy are essential for that moral discernment which the labor problem demands. While, of course, every student worthy of the name should possess the

following qualities of mind and heart, it may not be altogether idle to recall them once again:

What Christian Principles Require

“Christian principles require, above all, that the attitude of the student of economic questions should be open-minded and honest. He should avoid prejudice and partisanship. He should be suspicious of propaganda. And he should seek his knowledge elsewhere than in printed pages. If he is in earnest, he will go to the source of information. He will want to know how the other half lives and works. It might well be the ambition of every Church member to seek the friendship of some labor leader. And congregations might well request of those who have the ordering of their services that more frequent opportunity than at present be given them of hearing labor tell its own story rather than that they be left to gather their knowledge of the labor movement from ill-informed or prejudiced sources of information.” (*Forum*, August, 1923.)

The Church must preach insistently the necessity of reason and reasonableness if any progress is to be made toward the solution of the labor problem. The alternative to reason is emotion, sentiment, and, in the end, violence. Violence is an acknowledged evil. It poisons social as it does individual life. It cannot help either labor, or capital, or society.

The next point made by Dr. Ladd seems fairly reasonable, *viz.*: That “the Church should be sympathetic with labor. This principle is also in accordance with the tradition of the Church. The founder of Christianity was a carpenter. His mother, before His birth, sang a song, the Magnificat, which the Church still uses in its liturgical services, which speaks with considerable sympathy of the poor and of them of low degree, and rather disparagingly of the rich and the mighty. While He had friends among the rich and powerful and declared that Zacchaeus the publican could be saved although he had only given away one-half of his property, yet His ministry was marked by peculiar favor to the propertyless classes. The Church in its earliest years made so strong an appeal to the less fortunate that it has been described as a proletarian movement. Only in modern times, as a matter of fact, has it ceased to have a thoroughly democratic following.”

A Church Unafraid

And the next point is one that Dr. Kurth, in his work, *The Church at the Turning Points of History*, has already made so well, *viz.*: that “the Church should not be afraid of social change. It cannot afford to identify itself with any social order. Its function is not to preserve the status quo, but to work for a new order, for what the

Anglican bishops assembled at Lambeth have called ‘a fundamental change in the spirit and working of our economic life.’ Jesus Christ set His religion over against the claims of the world. The history of the Church has, on the whole, been the history of an institution independent of political and social change and superior to it.

“The Church was born in Jerusalem, a city which within a generation fell in ruins. It had hardly established itself in the Roman empire when that empire was dissolved by the inroads of the northern barbarians. In the new kingdom it made terms with feudalism, but feudalism at the end of the Middle Ages became extinct. When each of these systems passed away, the Jewish state, the Roman empire, the feudal system, it seemed to many, who witnessed their passing, to be the end of the world. But it was only a change to a new social order under which the Church was still able to work effectively in securing the triumph of its principles.”

And, of course, any other attitude towards change would be highly unreasonable. Change may be good, bad, or indifferent in itself. Religion has a place for change and for stability. The Church works for what is good in the present social order and is prepared to welcome other good things in new social orders. The Church certainly cannot be wedded to anything that is bad or vicious in any social order.

We have given labor’s demands on the church. We have given what a non-Catholic churchman thinks the attitude of the Church ought to be towards these demands. He did not speak for the Catholic Church, of course, but still how like the things are which he concedes, and the things the official Church teaches, with regard to the attitude of Catholics towards these same problems.

Looking Back

It would be well, then, for all of us to take stock, and not to be stampeded from our entrenched position by catch-cries or shibboleths, no matter from what quarter they may be hurled. If we look back from today to the days of the industrial revolution which followed the Reformation, and if we go back to these bad times, we shall see the worst conditions possible existing in the industrial world of England. “We shall see the little children whipped by their overseers because they nodded to sleep from weariness and utter exhaustion, as they were worked long exhausting hours in the most unsanitary factory buildings. We shall find women and children chained like dogs to coal carts in the collieries of England, driven along under the lash like brute beasts until their delicate bodies were completely worn out. We shall find diseased children working in ill-ventilated, over-heated factory rooms, and sleeping in relays in the same beds, which never cooled and were never clean.

In these days we shall find classic economists preaching a gospel of economic determinism, and laissez-faire or do-nothing policies of inaction, in face of these crying evils in the social and industrial world about them. We shall find nobody lifting a finger to fight the battles of the poor and the downtrodden. The Catholic Church was dead in the land, and the Wilberforces and the Malthuses and the Paleys of the reformed Church feared any social change that might improve the conditions of the proletariat laborers of England.

Here and there, at first, the voice of discontent was raised. Slowly and surely it grew louder and gradually obtained a hearing. Labor itself was organizing for its own liberation from economic slavery. It succeeded in improving its condition. It became yearly more and more conscious of its powers for reform. Did it ever dream in these early days that the time would come when dock laborers and coal diggers would be cabinet ministers, and its parliamentary leader premier of England? We have lived to see all these things, and the world has not come to an end. We know what the MacDonalds and Walshes and Wheatleys are doing now to save England and Europe from political and economic ruin, but where are the Wilberforces and the Malthuses and the Paleys?

Article LXXV

The Reformation the Root Cause of the Evils of Industrialism

We have been discussing the economic effects of the Reformation for some time. We devoted a number of these articles to it because it is a very important matter to know just why a good many things in our present civilization are as they are. When the whole philosophy, the whole network and viewpoint of a nation is changed, it must naturally have some influence on the life of the nation in the practical affairs of everyday life. When a religion of a people is changed and essentially altered, it would be folly to think that their manner of life must not be affected thereby also.

That is what happened exactly in Europe to many nations at the time of the Reformation. If we in America are the heirs of this change in philosophical and theological habits of thought, it is no wonder at all if our habits of industrial, social and economic life generally, would be profoundly influenced by these beliefs. We have emphasized the connection between the theory and practice of Reformation doctrines, so as to be able to draw the conclusion that history seems to justify, viz., that peoples are better off in every way, spiritually and temporally, for belonging to the one true Church. We say people on the whole and in the long run, because here and there a man may thrive and prosper temporally, in spite of his bad theories that sometimea justify dishonest and unjust practices, or practices that are, socially speaking, bad without being in themselves altogether sinful.

The Reformation a Bad Tree

To put the whole matter very plainly, the fruit of a bad tree will be bad. The Reformation is that bad tree. The other side of the question is untenable, *viz.*, that the world and its civilization will be as good and perhaps better for the reason that it has discarded the teachings of the one true Church, and is determined to go its own way without paying any heed to its authority or its teaching. The Bishop's Program of Reconstruction states this truth in its final paragraph thus:

“‘Society,’ said Pope Leo XIII, ‘can be healed in no other way than by a return to Christian institutions.’ The truth of these words is more widely perceived today than when they were written, more than 27 years ago. Changes in our economic and political systems will have only partial and feeble efficiency if they be not reinforced by the Christian view of work and wealth. Neither the moderate reforms advocated in this paper, nor any other program of betterment or reconstruction will prove reasonably effective without a reform in the spirit of both labor and capital.” The last sentence of the Bishops’ program, which censures the prevailing notions with regard to our social and industrial problems, is final and most convincing. “This is the human and Christian, in contrast to the purely commercial and pagan, ethics of industry.”

Catholic economists and moral teachers are not alone in this view of the matter. We have before us a series of lectures, delivered in 1921 at King's College, University of London, edited by Dr. Hearnshaw, professor of mediaeval history at the university. The title of the work is, *Mediaeval Contributions to Modern Civilization*. Each lecture was delivered by a separate scholar. Dr. Adair, who lectured on the “Economics of the Middle Ages,” has this to say apropos of the subject under discussion:

“But, after all, interesting as these survivals are, important as may be the part they play in the daily life of some of us, their influence upon modern economic conditions seems almost negligible in comparison with that which has resulted, from the study of the Middle Ages and the convictions that followed in the minds of many eminent men of the later nineteenth century – a conviction that is still a very living thing – that the Middle Ages had much to teach us, much that would lift us out of the sordid materialism into which we had sunk, much that might aid in solving those social and industrial problems that were crowding thick and fast upon England at the end of the last century.” (P. 242, *op. cit.*)

What England Could Have Learned from the Middle Ages

The point Dr. Adair makes (and he is not a Catholic) is this, that if England looked back during the great century of progress and science and learning – the

nineteenth century, she could have learned from the Middle Ages ways and means of avoiding what now seems the almost insoluble social and industrial problems that are crowding thick and fast upon not only England, but all industrial countries alike. And Dr. Adair, like every other intelligent and educated man, is no slavish admirer of England's modern industrial civilization. How could anybody laying the smallest claim to cultural training admire a civilization that gave us this sort of England:

"The first 50 years of the nineteenth century found England profoundly steeped in an indolent and insular spirit of self-satisfaction, an England given up to the grosser forms of money-making, lacking in aesthetic appreciation or in any honest sympathy with the world that surrounded her, an England like nothing so much as that fine flower of her artistic effort, her horsehair-covered furniture – smooth and sleek and shiny and exceeding loathsome to the touch. We were, indeed, a nation of shopkeepers, and shopkeepers of the sanctimonious type that praised God daily that they were not as other men.

"The corrupting finger of trade had touched everything; it was the Englishman's boast that he turned out good solid stuff; with its beauty, its originality, even the measure with which it met the convenience of his customers in other lands, he was not concerned – what was good enough for him must indeed be good enough for the rest of the world; even if the name originated in the early eighteenth century, the conventional picture of John Bull might well have been first drawn during these years, so much does it reek of their typical beef-fed self-complacency.

"With those whom he was pleased to call the lower classes he did not have much concern; they had certainly given trouble earlier in the century, but by 1850 they seemed to have been successfully hypnotized by their mechanics' institutes, and their politico-socialist discussions, and it was once more safe to treat them as so many cogs in the industrial wheel, for why should they not be fully satisfied so long as regular wages rewarded the years of their toil and a strictly just workhouse system tended their gray hairs to the grave." (*Op. cit.*, pp. 242-243, Dr. Adair.)

A New Spirit Stirring

During this same time that England was giving the world this sort of vulgar capitalistic civilization, there was another force working back to better things – working back and away from this so-called progress and enlightenment. It was the good natural instincts of the downtrodden, despised, enslaved workers themselves. A new spirit was stirring not up at the top, but away down at the bottom of the social scale as it then existed. This force was often directed by intellectuals, as it is to the present day in England. The poor laborers and the intellectuals alike sought all their inspiration in the past. Just as the Pre-Raphaelites sought to recover the

lost art of the Middle Ages, Ruskin and Morris, enthralled by an idealized picture of mediaeval industry in the heyday of the guild system, sought to re-establish such conditions as might restore again the economic independence of the good old times.

Could you imagine that only 50 years ago Ruskin was a pioneer along these mediaeval paths? He was the only professor Oxford ever had since the Reformation that the students cheered in the class hall as he pictured his own visions of a new world for their mental delectation. Ruskin died only 24 years ago (in the year 1900). He was one of a very small group of idealists who revolted against the vulgar, drab, materialistic world that surrounded them in modern industrial capitalistic nineteenth century England. Walter Crane described the movement very well in an article, "The Revival of Handicrafts and Design":

"The movement indeed represents, in some sense, a revolt against the hard mechanical life and its insensibility to beauty (quite another thing to ornament). It is a protest against that so-called industrial progress which produces shoddy wares, the cheapness of which is paid for by the lives of their producers and degradation of their users. It is a protest against the turning of men into machines, against artificial distinctions in art, and against making the immediate or market value, or possibility of profit, the chief test of artistic merit. It asserts, moreover, . . . apart from the very wholesome and real pleasure in the fashioning of a thing with claims to art and beauty, the struggle with and triumph over technical necessities which refuse to be gainsaid."

To think of all the ignorant criticism that this little band of idealists had to endure! As if it were not punishment enough for men like Ruskin, who had souls in them, to live in a society, and in social conditions, that reeked like our own American industrial civilization with typical beef-fed self-complacency. That is the reason why we do not wish to introduce into this series of articles any discussion, scientific or technical, of wages, or hours of work, or trusts, or monopolies, or child labor, or women in industry, or prices just or unjust, or any of the hundred other questions that might be discussed, with some profit perhaps, if the men and women who needed such enlightenment most were prepared mentally and morally to receive it; but why, rather, we take a broader and wider and deeper view of our social ills and their proximate and remote causes.

If we had all these questions solved satisfactorily as Dr. John A. Ryan wrote, even then the laborer would not be satisfied, because even then under conditions similar to present ones, he would still lack status, and so he would still feel that his social environment was responsible for forcing upon him a place in the social organism, where he would still be made to feel that he was something less than a human being, something less than a man, even though a little greater than a chattel. In other words, there is no such thing as a good plutocracy.

“For well nigh a thousand years the Church withstood all the forces and wiles of the capitalism of those days by her prohibition of interest on loans. During the period of her greatest influence, the Middle Ages, the industrial arrangements that she inspired and fostered were not capitalism and not the wage system, but an order in which the great majority of the workers virtually owned the land and actually owned the tools upon which and with which they labored.

If the Sway of the Church Had Not Been Interrupted

“And if her sway had not been interrupted by the social and religious disturbances of the sixteenth century, there is hardly a shadow of a reason for doubting that this wide diffusion of productive property would have been indefinitely extended and developed. The present system, in which the few own the bulk of the means of production, while the many possess little beyond their labor power, would have been, humanly speaking, impossible.

“To a Catholic who knows something of economic history, and something of the economic aspects of Catholic teaching, the attempt to chain the Church to the car of a plutocratic capitalism is impudent and sickening.” (Dr. John. A. Ryan, *Socialism: Promise or Menace?*, pp. 247-248.)

And yet these attempts so to chain the Church are not unknown. So much are they in favor sometimes that any attempt to bring back the older and the Catholic system, instead of the newer plutocratic Reformation capitalistic system, meets with nothing but criticism and resentment, not all confined to non-Catholic quarters by any manner of means. And why do we still insist that the past must be revived, that religion must come into its own, that Christendom was better than the thing of shreds and patches that has succeeded it?

Things Evident

First and for a material and sensible reason, because “we all feel – and those few of us who have analyzed the matter not only feel, but know – that the capitalist society has reached its term. It is almost self-evident that it cannot continue in the form which now three generations have known, and it is equally self-evident that some solution must be found for the increasing instability with which it has poisoned our lives.” (Hilaire Belloc, *The Servile State*, p. 77.)

And secondly, because the former things of Christendom were good and fair to see and live amongst, because “religion was then a living force, and its precepts guided a man in every walk of life, whether sleeping or working, eating or fasting; if one wants to know the economic theories of the day, it is to the moralists, the theologians, the scholastic writers, that one goes, and merely to say that their

theories were often violated proves little; that there are thieves in London does not prove that no man's goods are safe; indeed, every breach of a law that is recognized as such but serves to emphasize the reality of such a law, and many of the broad, fundamental truths upon which the Middle Ages based much of its life have, of recent years, gained acceptance once more by moralists and economists alike. Sometimes there has been conscious imitation, sometimes merely a revival of past ideas unconsciously evoked by similar circumstances and emotions." (Dr. Adair, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.)

Dr. George O'Brien, in his work, *An Essay on the Economic Effects of the Reformation*, states the same thesis. His whole book proves his contention most convincingly. A society penetrated throughout, as mediaeval society was, by the ideas and teaching of a dogmatic religion, will continue essentially unchanged as long as no change occurs in the religion on which it is based. In order, therefore, to effect far-reaching social changes in such a society, it is necessary to attack the religion on which it is rooted; and conversely, any attack on the religion entails, as a necessary consequence, serious social and economic changes. When the attack on the old religion is directed against its foundations, when the old faith is shaken from top to bottom, the social and economic consequences are bound to be correspondingly deep and revolutionary. The Reformation was an attack of this kind. In it we had the bad roots of our present industrial civilization and tradition. Can it be a matter of surprise that such a movement and such an attack should have been accompanied by social and economic consequences of the worst kind? The bad roots of our present industrial civilization must be pulled up. Only the true Church can produce a really good civilization. As we said in the beginning, the Reformation is the root cause of the trouble. "By their fruits you shall know them. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can an evil tree bring forth good fruit" (Matthew VII, 16-18.)

We think we have proved our thesis, which is that Catholicism makes for industrial democracy, while Capitalism is economic Protestantism. Capitalism is dying of dry rot. When Capitalism is dead and buried, there will remain Catholicism and Communism, that is to say, we must go back to industrial democracy or go the way of industrial anarchy. In other words, it is Catholicism, Capitalism or Communism. The social and industrial battles of the future will be between Leo and Lenin.

EPILOGUE

By

G. K. CHESTERTON

Last night, as the gray twilight deepened into darkness, a weird and telepathic conviction came to me that somebody was somewhere at that moment writing down these words: "The modern world is no longer in the swaddling-bands of the creeds; it has come to years of discretion and claims a full responsibility for its own thoughts and actions"; or words to that effect. This conviction was not wholly due to a cold and creeping shudder that came across me; such as that which is said to warn a man that someone steps across his grave. It was indirectly connected with a conviction closer to experience; the knowledge that somebody does write that sentence every night, in order that it may appear every morning in all those newspapers which pride themselves on giving us what is new. But there is something much more extraordinary about that sentence than the suggestion that it is new; and that is the belated realization that came to me that, after all, it is true. I had read it some nine hundred and ninety times before it even occurred to me that this could be the case; but when I read it the nine hundred and ninety-first time I realized suddenly that, even in a world of so much seeming waste, even these words had not been written in vain. The phrase is much more true than the writers are aware; it is true in a sense that they would not at all approve; and if they knew how true it was, they probably would not write it. I confess that there falls on me a sort of hush of awe, and almost of terror, to think of all those thousands of journalists simultaneously writing down something that is perfectly true, even without knowing it.

In a simple and almost sinister sense the modern world really has come of age. That modern spirit that had birth in the Renaissance, its boyhood in the Protestant and commercial centuries, and its first manhood amid the machinery of the industrial revolution, really has been going long enough by this time to be judged on its own merits. It really is old enough to take the responsibility for its own

actions. It really is old enough to answer for itself. But the fact may perhaps appear less boisterously exhilarant when we consider what it has to answer for, and what its actions have been.

In any case, however, the distinction is of some importance; because those who make this suggestion generally also make suggestions flatly inconsistent with it. While insisting that the modern man can do anything he likes, because it happens to be something they like, they commonly take refuge in a contrary suggestion when it happens to be something they do not like. Anything which is wrong with the world is attributed to the stringency of those dogmatic bonds that have been burst asunder, or the vitality of those superstitions that have been finally slain. Now, it is obvious that these philosophers cannot have it both ways. If it be true that emancipated man has made a new and wonderful world in his own image, he cannot possibly excuse the ugliness of the image he has made as due to his devotion to the idols he has deserted. In short, if he is responsible for his actions, he is responsible for his bad actions; and cannot put the blame on the religion from which he broke away in order to act at all. This is obvious even in abstract logic, and much more vividly obvious when we come to concrete facts. We may like or dislike modern machinery; but we cannot say it is an historical fact that a modern machine was modelled on a torture-engine of the Spanish Inquisition. We may like or dislike a hive of workers "living in" under capitalistic conditions; but we cannot say it is a historical fact that those who arranged it modelled it, with devout ardor, on a mediaeval monastery. We may like or dislike a modern colonial war; but we cannot assert that it was imposed on us by the Pope like a Crusade; we may like or dislike the Yellow Press, but we cannot pretend that it is one of the false colors flown by the Scarlet Woman. Modern man is, as his admirers say, by this time a sufficiently ancient man to have done a good many things on his own account, without the slightest consultation with his mediaeval grandmother. There is hardly a link left of the chains that bound him to the pre-Reformation prison. He has come out of prison long ago. The only question is what has come out of prison; and whether some perverse persons have not been tempted to prefer the prison to the prisoner.

To the modern man who has reached this degree of real doubt, truer and more terrible than the cheap riddles of the Bible-smasher, the chapters of this book are addressed. It would be, indeed, unwise to end it in a tone which denies that his doubt is a real doubt; that is, a doubt that cuts both ways. He may justly claim much that is valuable in the modern world; nor need he fear, as I think he sometimes does, that its critics propose merely an artificial and antiquarian reconstruction of the mediaeval world. For, indeed, those who understand the Catholic tradition of Christianity are not offering a Church which is exclusively at issue with modern things, or even one that was exclusively expressed in mediaeval

things. The point is not so much that that age was relatively right while this age is relatively wrong; it is rather that the Church was relatively right when all ages were relatively wrong. Even if the modern man's doubt goes no farther than balancing sweating against serfdom, or swindling financiers against robber barons, it will imply the need of some third thing, some authority above the ages, to hold the balance. History has produced only one thing that can even claim to hold it.

When the Christian apostle declared that he died daily, he told all the truth there was in what was told us, in our youth, to the effect that the Church was dying. If the saint had died every day, the Church has died in every century. Many said the Church was dying when Julian proclaimed from the Imperial throne the worship of Apollo. Many would have said again, after the first triumphs of many oriental heresies, that the Church was dying; and in this sense they would have been right. The Church was dying; but the worship of Apollo was dead. Many would have said it when Calvinism was overshadowing province after province, and rightly; the Church was dying, but the oriental heresies were dead. When the French Revolution had made a new Heaven and a new Earth, it was quite obvious to every clear-sighted person that Christianity had come to an end. The Church was certainly dying; but Calvinism was dead. The Christian religion has died daily; its enemies have only died. And what we see before us today is not a mere fashion of the praise of one century over another; but at most a rather unique illustration of the fact that the world fares worse without that religion than with it. The Church is dying as usual; but the modern world is dead; and cannot be raised save in the fashion of Lazarus.

End

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